

Valley Middle School

Oakland, New Jersey



Faculty Handbook

2026-2027

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THE OAKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS' PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION/MISSION STATEMENT

The Oakland Schools are child-focused learning centers that aim to promote high academic achievement in a supportive, challenging environment. They strive to prepare students for the 21st century, equipping them with the academic and technological skills necessary for success in future educational pursuits and professional careers. Our schools foster the development of cultural awareness and social consciousness, as they seek to develop individuals who can both relate to and contribute to the expanded global culture in which we all live. Our schools very much reflect our motto – *Oakland...A Learning Community Committed to Excellence*.

Free public education for all children is a cornerstone of a democratic society that values the worth and dignity of each individual. The primary goal of the Oakland Board of Education shall be to offer each child in this District the educational opportunity that will enable him/her to successfully function in a democratic society. The schools should provide all children with equal opportunity for total growth in harmony with their needs, so that they may become vocationally and economically effective; and so that they may develop cognitively, physically, emotionally and socially.

The Oakland Board of Education, as the agent responsible for the education of the children of this District, will provide a coordinated and planned educational program that incorporates into its curriculum the lessons and experiences, within and outside the classroom, that are needed to attain the educational goals of the District. The Board recognizes the need for ongoing development and updating of the instructional program, and appreciates the need for continuing professional development. The Board will also seek to employ a high caliber, well-prepared staff of adequate size and with wide-ranging abilities. With a relevant and current curriculum and a competent and talented staff, the Board will strive to provide an educational system that responds to individual needs and talents while assisting each pupil to become a self-respecting individual who can function effectively in society.

The Oakland Schools hold high expectations for each child, and each student in our schools should be inspired to be the best person and student that he/she can be. Consistent with this philosophical belief, it is the expectation of the Oakland School District that all pupils will achieve the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards at all grade levels.

The entire school program should be a result of the cooperative planning and action of the school staff, the pupils, the parents, and the community, under the direction of the school administration. The Board will work cooperatively with home and community, including business and industry, as well as with school staff, in the ongoing development of the educational program. Moreover, the Board will provide pupils and staff with adequate educational supplies, equipment, and facilities, as needs dictate and means permit.

The purpose of education in the District's schools is to facilitate the growth and development of each child toward his/her potential. The District's staff shall recognize individual differences among pupils and encourage the students' achievement and progress, not only in basic skills but, also, in the ability to think independently, critically, and creatively. The school staff shall help pupils to understand our democratic society; to believe in it and to act fairly in their relationships with others. District staff will also seek to develop in students' attitudes of respect, empathy, and helpfulness toward others. Learning activities will encourage pupils to have the ability and the desire to contribute to the world, to acquire knowledge and skills necessary to do this with satisfaction, and to use effective methods in understanding questions and in solving problems.

VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Inherent in our philosophy is the recognition that middle school students vary widely in their stage of physical, cognitive and affective development. They are not only undergoing physical changes, but they are also making a transition from concrete to abstract thinking. Therefore, Valley Middle School provides living and learning experiences to sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students that enable each child to grow both academically and socially while recognizing these physical and emotional changes. These experiences are learning tools, which will be vital to students as they assume roles in a changing society.

The focal point of the Valley Middle School philosophy is the learner. The program is adapted to the individual differences, special needs, and abilities of the preadolescent. It recognizes the uniqueness of each student and promotes the self-concept of each student as a valuable and talented human being. The middle school must provide opportunities for students to achieve and demonstrate excellence in a number of domains (e.g., academics, the arts, athletics). Additionally, a middle school must make certain that every student has an opportunity to excel in some area.

Consistent with these philosophical underpinnings, Valley Middle School provides a program of studies and activities that form a basis for exploration toward one's full potential. The curriculum is intellectually stimulating and offers a variety of options and exploratory experiences that will help the student to make choices. In addition to the formal "school-day" curriculum, Valley Middle School offers a comprehensive extracurricular program that includes academic, athletic, artistic, leadership, and service opportunities for middle schoolers. It, also, aims to help students identify and develop interest areas. Further, the extracurricular program is designed to engage every student in afterschool activities and decrease the possibility of student anonymity or school disaffection.

The organization pattern is flexible, unique and tailored to the special needs of the preadolescent and their program needs. It assists students in developing at their own learning and developmental rates and fosters the intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth of each student according to that student's capabilities and interests.

Finally, the middle school provides the preadolescent with a smooth transition from elementary to secondary education. It allows the student to emerge as a responsible, considerate, competent, and confident individual with the potential to become an independent critical thinker and decision maker who is capable of considering alternatives to solving problems.

VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL SCHEDULE

The Valley Middle School day is comprised of morning homeroom and eight periods. Three minutes is allowed between each period for students to change classes. Faculty should note the following schedule:

- 7:50 a.m.** Teachers must sign in at the Valley Middle School main office by 7:50 and then report to their morning assignments (i.e., homerooms, hall/door duty, locker supervision, etc.)
- 8:00 a.m.** **Homeroom/First period classrooms must be opened and teachers are required to be in their rooms at 8:00 a.m.** Students are dismissed from gym or café at 7:53 a.m. Teachers who are not assigned to a Homeroom are required to be supervising the students in the hallways, etc., between 8:00 and 8:07 a.m.
- 8:00 a.m.** **Homeroom begins.** All students must be in Homeroom unless the Homeroom teacher has given a student a written pass to be elsewhere. During Homeroom, the teacher will take attendance using our computerized student management system. Attendance must be submitted by 8:15 a.m. Morning announcements will be read over the public address between 8:00 a.m. and 8:05 a.m. Homeroom teachers are to make certain that all students are quiet and attentive during morning announcements. Homeroom teachers are to post on the bulletin board instrumental music, band, choir, and workshop schedules and bring these to the students' attention.

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:53 a.m.	Bell Rings-Students Go To Lockers
8:00-8:05 a.m.	Homeroom
8:07- 8:51 a.m.	Period 1
8:54-9:38 a.m.	Period 2
9:41-10:25 a.m.	Period 3
10:28-10:49 a.m.	Period 4A (Per. 4 is 6 th Grade Lunch)
10:51-11:12 a.m.	Period 4B
11:15-11:36 a.m.	Period 5A (Per. 5 is 8 th Grade Lunch)
11:38-11:59 p.m.	Period 5B
12:02-12:23 a.m.	Period 6A (Per. 6 is 7 th Grade Lunch)
12:25-12:46 p.m.	Period 6B
12:49-1:33 p.m.	Period 7
1:36-2:20 p.m.	Period 8
2:20 p.m.	Bus Rider Only Dismissal
2:27 p.m.	Walker/Carpool Dismissal

- 2:20 p.m.** **All Teachers must be in the hallways or their assigned spots supervising the exit of the students.**
- 2:45 p.m.** Teachers may leave the school building for the day, unless it is their extra help day or have other professional responsibilities (e.g., faculty meetings.)

Please note: All teachers must remain within the school building until 2:45 p.m. unless authorization to leave earlier is granted by Mr. Desiderio. A written request to leave early must be provided. An eighth period preparation period does not excuse a teacher from engaging in professional duties from 2:20 p.m. until 2:45 p.m.

Similarly, all teachers must remain within the school during their preparation periods to fulfill their professional responsibilities. In the event that a professional or personal issue requires otherwise, the teacher must request an exception to this requirement from the Principal. If the request is approved, the teacher must sign-out of the school and sign-in on his/her return.

MINIMUM DAYS

The following is the minimum day schedule for Valley Middle School.

7:53 a.m.	Bell Rings-Students Go To Lockers
8:00 – 8:30 a.m.	Period 1
8:33 - 9:03 a.m.	Period 2
9:06 - 9:36 a.m.	Period 3
9:39 - 10:09 a.m.	Period 4
10:12 - 10:42 a.m.	Period 5
10:45 - 11:15 a.m.	Period 6
11:18 - 11:48 a.m.	Period 7
11:51 - 12:21 p.m.	Period 8
12:21 p.m.	Bus Rider Only Dismissal
12:28 p.m.	Walker/Carpool Dismissal
12:40 p.m.	Teacher Dismissal

DELAYED OPENING SCHEDULE

9:40 a.m.	Teachers Arrive (Must Check In)
9:55 a.m.	Bell Rings-Students Go to Lockers
10:00-10:30 a.m.	Period 1
10:33-11:03 a.m.	Period 2
11:06-11:36 a.m.	Period 3
11:39-12:09 p.m.	Period 4 (Gr. 6 Lunch)
12:12-12:42 p.m.	Period 5 (Gr. 8 Lunch)
12:45-1:15 p.m.	Period 6 (Gr. 7 Lunch)
1:18- 1:48 p.m.	Period 7
1:51-2:21 p.m.	Period 8
2:21 p.m.	Bus Rider Only Dismissal
2:27 p.m.	Walkers/Carpool
2:45 p.m.	Teacher Dismissal

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING 2026-2027

Emergency School Closing notification for the 2026-27 school year will be through use of the Reverse 911 system. Please make sure that Ms. Englishman or Ms. O'Dell in the office have your current phone number in the system.

IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS ABOUT TIME/SCHEDULES

All classes are to begin and end according to this schedule. Teachers should not detain students past the prescribed dismissal time for the class unless they provide the student(s) with a pass to the next class. Likewise, all teachers should insist that students are in class on time.

If students arrive to class late without a pass, ask for the reason. Teachers should allow the student in

class so additional time is not wasted. It is then up to the teacher to accept the reason for lateness or, if appropriate, assign a consequence such as telephoning the parent or assigning a teacher detention.

TEACHERS MUST BE IN THEIR TEACHING ROOMS ON TIME.

When teachers are late, students are unsupervised. The unacceptable behavior in which students may engage in when unsupervised may result in unsafe situations and student injury. Additionally, since the teacher sets the tone in the classroom, habitual teacher lateness to class may encourage students to remain in the halls and be late themselves. Such a situation is often unsafe and disruptive to surrounding classrooms, and doesn't enhance the academic focus of the children.

During the passing time between periods, teachers must be standing at the classroom entrance supervising the movement of students. Unacceptable and unsafe behavior should be stopped immediately. If each teacher supervised her/his section of the hallway, proper discipline will be maintained and safety will be enhanced.

EXTRA HELP FOR STUDENTS: GUIDELINES FOR THIS REQUIREMENT

Although teachers are contractually required to provide extra help for students at least one day per week, it is understood that teachers in the Oakland Public Schools will provide extra help to students who are having difficulty mastering the curriculum as frequently as needed. Teachers are required to inform students and parents which afternoon(s) they are available for extra help. This notice shall be provided to parents as part of each teacher's *Back-To-School Night* presentation and shall be posted on each teacher's web page.

Teachers should obtain from the parent a note or an e-mail that acknowledges that the student will be attending an after school extra help session. This ensures that the parent is aware that the child will be remaining after school and that the parent will make transportation arrangements for the child to arrive home safely. The school does not provide bus transportation home for students who attend either extra help sessions or other after school clubs and activities. The teacher shall not provide transportation home for the student.

If a teacher is providing extra help to students prior to the start of the school day, the teacher must provide participating students with a pass to enter the building prior to 8:00 a.m. The pass should be given to the students the day before the extra help session. The office should, also, be informed that the teacher is having an early morning extra help session, as well as the location where the teacher and students will be meeting. Early morning extra help sessions will not begin prior to 7:30 a.m.

For the safety and security of both teachers and students, the teacher must inform the administration at the beginning of the school year, which afternoon(s) they will be providing extra help for students and the location of the extra help sessions. Should an emergency occur, it is critical for the administration to know who is in the building and where they are located. If, during the school year, the teacher needs to change the extra help day, they will inform the administration and the parents of the new day.

Teachers must email the Principal, Vice Principal and secretaries the names of the students that are with them for extra help. This is necessary information in case of an emergency.

Teachers shall keep an attendance record of those students who attend extra help. Additionally, teachers shall note what time a student leaves the extra help session. Know that this is an important safety requirement. Further, a student's participation in extra help sessions shall be a consideration in the teacher's determination of the student's quarterly achievement and effort grades.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Emergency drills will be conducted monthly to help students and staff understand the actions to take in an emergency. State regulations require that at least one fire drill and one security drill occur monthly. Such drills are required to be reported to the State. Emergency drills include fire drills, lockdown drills, evacuation drills and shelter-in-place drills as well as additional simulations to help ensure student safety during the school day. Please familiarize yourself with all procedures governing all emergency drills.

2026 - 2027 PLAN FOR EMERGENCY (NON-FIRE) DRILLS

September	Tornado Drill
October	Evacuation; Non-Fire
November	Active Shooter
December	Lockdown
January	Bomb Threat
February	Active Shooter
March	Lockdown
April	Evacuation; Non-Fire
June	Shelter on Site
July*	Tornado Drill
July - Suggested drill for any Summer Programs, as required.	

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills will be conducted periodically throughout the school year. The purpose of the drills is to adequately prepare and familiarize students and staff with appropriate procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. It is absolutely imperative that students learn the proper procedure and also realize the importance of appropriate conduct. Therefore, during the first session of school in September, all teachers must discuss with their students the procedure of and the student behavioral expectations during a fire drill.

In the teacher's discussion, the following should be included:

1. The reasons for and the importance of fire drills.
2. The fire exit procedures outlined below, which should be used by students in that room.
3. Alert students to the possibility that the assigned exit may be blocked and, if such is the case, students are to use the nearest open exit. Be certain that students are aware of alternative exits.
4. Stress the need for silence during a fire drill as well as the unacceptability of pushing, tripping, and joking behavior.
5. Any student who is not with his/her class group when the fire alarm is sounded (i.e. in lavatory, corridor, etc.) should quickly exit the building and report to the nearest teacher/administrator and inform them that they are not with their class.
6. While outside the building, students should be silent awaiting further instructions from their teacher or from the office via the public address system.
7. Re-entry into the building must be in the same orderly fashion as was the exit. During a fire drill, teachers are to stay with their classes, make certain that all students are present by taking

attendance, and are responsible for maintaining order. (Teachers need to make certain that they have their yellow folders with the class roster with them during any emergency drill, and they need to be aware of any student who is not with the class (i.e., a student who may have gone to the rest room, etc.) Teachers must notify administration of any students that are not with their class. It is imperative that attendance is taken once the students have exited the building and again once they have reentered the classroom.

A fire drill will be held shortly after the beginning of school to make certain that procedures are understood, to determine whether assigned exits are satisfactory and to ascertain whether any procedural changes need to be made. Any questions that a faculty or staff member has concerning a fire drill and/or procedure to be followed should be promptly directed to office personnel. Likewise, any recommended procedural alteration should be immediately communicated to the Principal.

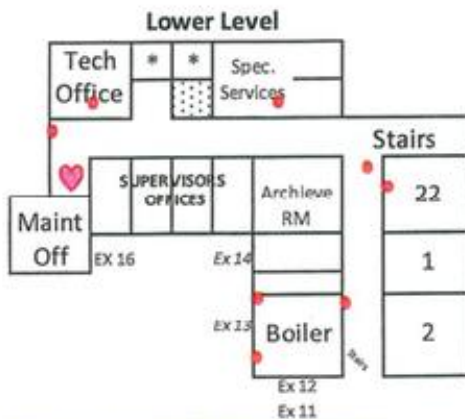
BUILDING FIRE EXTINGUISHER LOCATIONS

Teachers are to note the location of fire extinguishers in the areas they occupy.

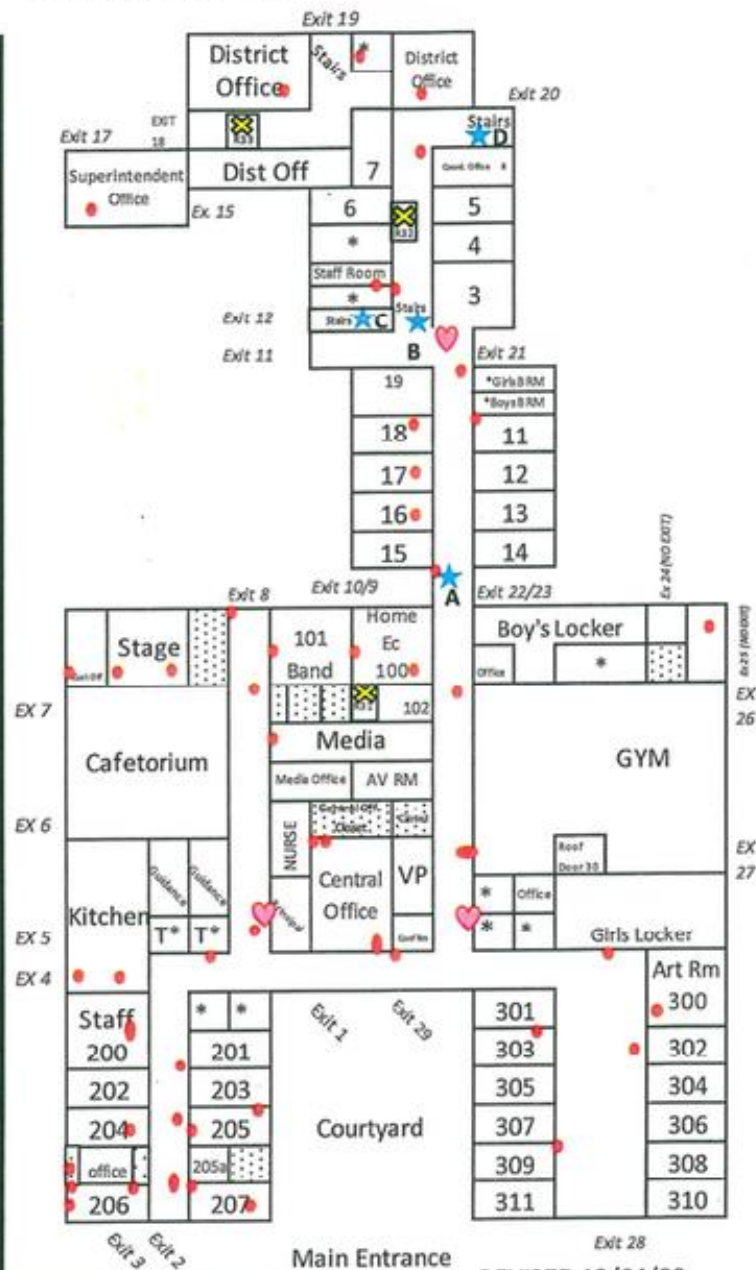
LOCATION	QUANTITY
Custodial Office	1
Stage	2
Kitchen	2
Cafe Hall	3
Music Room (Room 101)	1
Library	1
200 Wing Hall	4
Staff Room (200 Wing)	1
Room 204	1
Room 205	2
Room 206	3
Room 207	2
Main Office	3
Main Hall	1
300 Wing Hall	3
Art Room	1
Room 303	1
Gym Hall	2
Home Economics (Room 100)	2
Generator Room	1
1950 Hall	2
Room 16	1
Room 17	1
Room 18	1
1930 Upper Hall	2
1930 Lower Hall	2
1930 Staff Room	1
Room 22	1
Boiler Room	2
Tech Office	1
Special Services	1
Stairway (by exterior door #18)	1
Business Office	1
Business Administrator	1
Superintendent's Office	1
Bus #50	1
Bus #70	1
Bus #1380	1
Bus #1790	1
Bus #1860	1
Landscape Trailer	1
Total Fire Extinguishers	63

Valley Middle School

Ramapo Valley Road **Upper Level**



Fire Exit Schedule	
Room	Exit
3,4	12
Upper Staff Rm	12
5,6,7,8	20
District Off	19
1,2	11
11, 12	21
13,14	22
15,16, 17	10
18,19,	11
Archieve Rm, 22, Spec. Ser.	20
Maint., Tech	18
Supervisor Offices	18
100, 102, boys gym	26
Girls Gym	27
Band, 101	8
Media, Café, Guid., AV Rm.	6/7
Cust. Off	7
Kitchen	5
200, 201,202, 203	6
204, 205, 205a, 207	2
206,	3
300-303,305	29
304, 306-308,309-311	28
Central Off, Nurse	1



KEY

- Fire Extinguishers
- Closet / Storage Area
- Lavatories
- AED
- Stairway
- Roof Hatch
- PARKING LOT

CHEMICAL/HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES AND CHILDREN

Please be advised that Children must not be in contact with or use substances that may be potentially dangerous to them.

Any Teacher who has hair sprays, plant food, etc. in his/her room is to keep such hazardous substances in a locked drawer or locker cabinet. They are not to be in a location where students may have access to them.

Additionally, students are not to use liquid cleaners to clean desks, etc. custodial personnel have been directed not to dispense under any circumstances any chemical-hazardous substance to children even if requested to do so by a teacher.

Deodorant sprays are not permitted to be sprayed due to respiratory health concerns.

NO SMOKING IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING

Per State law, no smoking is permitted in any section of a school building. Violations of this law can result in fines being levied by municipal authorities. Therefore, smoking is not allowed in Valley Middle School or on school property, at any time, by any person, this includes all forms of electronic cigarettes and vaping.

GRADING PHILOSOPHY: EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

Inherent in our school's philosophy is the belief that each child is a unique individual. The variances middle schoolers have in cognitive development are at least as wide as the variances associated with the physical development of children of this age. Therefore, we believe that each child's progress must be individually ascertained and should reflect realistic goals for that child. In determining the progress that a student has made, the teacher needs to consider the skill level with which he/she began the study, the actual progress made, the effort expended by the student, any handicapping condition that might exist and any emotional, social, medical, or familial factors which might influence progress. Students should not be compared against each other as a means to justify a grade.

Multiple criteria must be used to determine student progress and to assign a report card grade. These criteria should include classroom tests, quizzes, homework, classroom participation, notebook completion, home and school projects, and work submitted for extra credit. At all times student should know what the criteria are upon which a grade is based. Teacher/student discussion should occur in order that the student will be aware of how to improve his/her progress and grade. When students are progressing unsatisfactorily, the teacher is expected to discuss the reasons for the unsatisfactory progress with the student, the child's guidance counselor, and the child's parent/guardian. At Valley Middle School, every effort must be made to make school and learning a positive experience for each child.

Student progress is reported to parents four times during the school year. Quarters are approximately ten weeks long, and report cards can be found through the parent portal. At conferences, parents and teachers have the opportunity to discuss each child's progress and to share information with each other.

REPORTING OF STUDENT PROGRESS 2026 - 2027

REPORT CARDS:

Report cards **will be posted on the parent portal at the end of every marking period, as well as at the completion of the school year in June.**

Parent/Teacher Conferences

November 11, 2026

November 12, 2026

GRADING AT VMS

- A = Student has not only attained all objectives for the marking period, but has also consistently demonstrated excellent performance.
- B = Student has attained all objectives for the marking period and has demonstrated very good performance.
- C = Student has attained most of the objectives for the marking period and has demonstrated satisfactory performance.
- D = Student has not attained the objectives for the marking period and has demonstrated minimal performance.
- U = Student has not attained the objectives for the marking period and has demonstrated unsatisfactory performance.

EFFORT INDICATORS

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 1 = Excellent | 3 = Fair |
| 2 = Good | 4 = Unsatisfactory |

Teachers may also select from the following list of COMMENTS to further explain a student's progress:

1. Student is doing excellent work.
2. Enthusiastic, cooperative, actively contributing.
3. Very pleased with student progress.
4. Good effort, but student is finding work difficult.
5. Improving.
6. Repeated absences impair progress.
7. Assigned work is not completed on time.
8. Needs to be prepared for class.
9. Inattentive to class instruction.
10. Test/quiz grades need improvement.
11. Class participation needs to be improved.
12. Demonstrates inappropriate classroom behavior.
13. Needs to maintain consistent effort/attitude.
14. Parent conference is requested

VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RECOGNITION PROGRAM - PHILOSOPHICAL STATEMENT

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

At Valley Middle School, all students are asked to work hard and be the best students they can be. Students who accept this challenge earn academic distinction by receiving the Principal's Award, the Scholastic Commendation or the Effort Commendation.

- The Principal's Award is given to any student who earns an "A" in every subject and no effort grade less than a "2."
- The Scholastic Commendation is awarded to any student who earns no less than a "B" in any subject and has no effort grade less than a "2."
- The Effort Commendation is given to any student who does not qualify for the two awards above, but has worked hard and had no effort grade less than a "2" in any subject.

STUDENTS

STUDENT LOCKERS

All students will be provided the privilege of using a school locker. Student lockers and "cubbies" are school property even when loaned to students. All school property must be respected and used for the intended purpose, and can be inspected at the discretion of school or law enforcement officials. Locker assignments will be a part of the scheduled distribution to students distributed on the first day of school

Homeroom teachers must discuss the following with their students:

1. Locker combinations should be kept confidential.
2. If a student is having a problem with his/her locker, he/she should inform the office.
3. Lockers are to be kept neat and clean. There will be periodic locker inspections to insure that this is done. There will also be periodic "locker clean-outs."
4. No food, candy, etc., should be stored overnight in the locker.
5. No kicking or writing on any locker is permitted. Students are NOT permitted to decorate the lockers of other students for birthdays, special events, etc. Should a teacher discover anything inappropriate, she/he should report the abuse to an administrator.
6. Locker usage is a privilege, which will be revoked if rules are not followed.

Students are permitted to go to their lockers throughout the day but cannot be late to class due to visiting their locker. Students need to clearly understand that locker abuse will not be tolerated. Therefore, all teachers are requested to stop any abuse of a locker that he/she witnesses. Teachers are also requested to periodically remind students of proper care as well as pride in the appearance of our school building.

BACKPACKS

Students at Valley Middle School are permitted to use backpacks during the school day.

STUDENT LUNCH

There are six twenty-one minute student lunch times. Students will eat lunches according to the following schedule:

Grade 6	-	Periods 4A or 4B
Grade 7	-	Periods 6A or 6B
Grade 8	-	Periods 5A or 5B

School lunch will be available for faculty and staff during periods 4, 5, 6 and 7 (until 1:15).

NOTE: Teachers must notify both office and cafeteria personnel of any special arrangements which might affect the school lunch program. Such changes might include field trips, team projects, and the detaining of students.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE/EXCLUSION FROM CLASS

Student discipline in the school is the responsibility of all professionals. Consistency with student expectations communicates a clear message to students.

It is each teacher's responsibility to establish and maintain positive student behavior. When students are not in compliance with the Code of Conduct, teachers should intervene to correct the student's behavior. As part of the intervention, the teacher should contact the student's parents/ guardians as well as the student's Counselor. Students who do not meet behavioral expectations should be issued a teacher detention; to be served during lunch or after school. When assigning a student an after school detention, the student must be given a day's notice and parents must be contacted. A signed detention notice or email exchange must take place with parent/guardian. Teacher must email the Vice Principal that the student had a lunch or after school detention.

When teacher interventions do not change the student's behavior, the teacher should refer the matter to the Vice Principal for assistance. The teacher must complete a Misconduct Report that includes an explanation of the circumstances and previous interventions. It is the teacher's responsibility to contact the parent/guardian and inform them of the student's behavior. The Vice Principal will conference with the student and determine the appropriate consequences. If a student is ever sent out of his or her class due to a behavior issue, **the office must be notified immediately** and the student must have a Pass.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS)

As a disciplinary action, an administrator may assign a student to in-school suspension. In this event, teachers will be asked to supply both classroom and homework assignments for the child to complete. The student will not attend classes nor will the student eat lunch with his/her peers, however, upon the student's return to classes, the student's completed schoolwork by will be submitted by the student for credit. During the in-school suspension period, teachers will be assigned to supervise the student and help him/her complete assignments.

The location of In-School Suspension will most frequently be the Conference Room in the General Office, and teachers will be assigned the duty of supervising any student(s) suspended from classes, or excluded from classes or from the cafeteria. Once informed of this supervision responsibility, the teacher should report to the Conference Room for the designated period.

1. A student who has In-School Suspension for the school day should report to the Main Office, not to Period 1, upon entering the school.
2. The ISS teacher will escort the student to her/his locker during the day to obtain textbooks and materials.
3. Student will use the lavatory in the Health Office during the school day.
4. Student will not eat lunch with the class, but he/she will be escorted to and from the cafeteria to purchase lunch during a different period. The student will eat lunch, under teacher supervision, in the ISS room.
5. Should there be more than one student in the "ISS/Conference Room," conversation must be limited to class assignments (i.e., minimum contact). Teachers will send assignments to the "Conference Room" as necessary. Additional work may be provided by the supervising teacher, if the student completes all assigned work.
6. Dismissal time is at the discretion of the Principal.

STUDENT ILLNESS/HOMEWORK BUDDIES

Teachers shall encourage students to have a study partner (a homework buddy) in each class who can share work that is missed because of illness or special program participation. **Teachers must post assignments and homework on the classroom whiteboard, Parent Portal and Google Classroom.**

STUDENT ENTRY/EXIT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING

All students should, upon their arrival, enter the Cafetorium or Gymnasium. While in the Cafetorium, students are required to sit at a table and quietly converse until they are dismissed at 7:53 a.m. Additionally, unless they have an appointment with a teacher or are participating in an extracurricular activity, students must leave the school building after 2:27 p.m.

STUDENT HOMEWORK

Student learning is extended beyond the school day by assigning work to be completed after school hours. Home assignments can be practice, research, reading or activities designed to challenge. Teachers need to make certain that homework assigned is on a regular basis, worthwhile, appropriate to the individual students, and reviewed by the teacher. It is expected that a student will be assigned relevant homework **each night** in mathematics, reading, and writing.

In Oakland, the suggested average daily time for homework is according to a student's grade level:

Grades 6	45 minutes
Grades 7, 8	60 minutes

Students need to know that homework is important and needs to be completed. Including homework as part of the student's achievement grade confirms its importance to both students and parents. Please make certain homework is part of the report card grade. Homework may not be assigned during holiday weekends or extended vacations. These "wellness weekends/vacations" are designed to provide time for students to enjoy their time off with family.

Options in homework assignments can help to motivate students. Since the same objective can be met through many means, homework options are viable. By offering options, we are providing for the difference among students. Choice also permits students to have a voice in the learning process based

upon the students' individualities. Choosing enhances the commitment and investment of the student. All homework assignments must be written on the board and placed on the teacher websites. Therefore, even if a student is not in class, he/she can go to the room and obtain the assignment.

STUDENT STUDY SKILLS

The study skills of our students are very important and are an essential part of their learning to be successful. As a result, certain procedures are deemed important enough to be established school-wide for students to follow.

Again, recognizing that a student may have up to seven teachers in one day, at Valley Middle School students' paper heading will be:

Name (First Line)	Date
Class/Period (Second Line)	Assignments

TEACHERS

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Reporting of student attendance is done daily utilizing the Realtime program. If students are absent from your class but not on the absentee list, Instrumental/String Music lesson list, Workshop list, or Speech Instruction list, teachers are required to contact the Main Office to ensure that the child is located. If there is an ongoing concern with a student's attendance contact the School Nurse and Counselor who have a plan in place to address student absenteeism.

STUDENT SUPERVISION DURING LUNCH

Please be advised that *active and effective* supervision in the cafeteria, including playground, requires the following:

1. Constant circulation among student tables
2. Monitoring students who wish to leave the cafeteria for any reason
3. Reminding students to properly dispose of their refuse
4. Refraining from any activity (e.g., grading papers, eating, etc.) unrelated to student supervision
5. Advising students to keep all exits clear of their personal belongings
6. Enforcing the rules and procedures enumerated below
7. Identify any student who is "a loner" during lunch and inform the administration, the Counselor, and team colleagues of any such student
8. Be vigilant about identifying any incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and address such incidents according to established procedures
9. This time should not be used to grade student work, eating, or other business unrelated to student supervision

In addition, please be aware that the following rules governing student conduct will be posted in the cafeteria throughout the year:

In the Valley Middle School cafeteria, students . . .

1. Walk to the kitchen and line up in an orderly manner.
2. Are responsible for cleaning up their own area after eating.
3. Do not throw food or other objects.
4. Return to their desks five minutes before the scheduled end of the period.
5. Remain seated and wait for a teacher or an aide to dismiss them.
6. Wishing to leave the cafeteria must request permission from a teacher or an aide. Once granted permission, students must obtain a pass and sign out in the Cafetorium log book.
7. Who want to see a teacher or go to the Library during lunch must have a pass from a teacher prior to leaving the lunchroom.

NURSE/PLAYGROUND

If a student is injured on the school's playground areas the office should be notified IMMEDIATELY and the nurse will respond to the call. When notifying the office, please indicate whether a wheelchair, a stretcher, etc., is needed and please provide a general idea of the nature of the injury sustained.

FLEXIBLE TIME SCHEDULES:

Workshop, Instrumental Music, Band, Chorus, Special Education Resource Center, and Special Education Related Services (e.g., speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, ESL) may have flexible schedules. Students may meet for class with their teacher before or after school on a flexible schedule.

GRADE LEVEL SCHEDULE

Grade Level Team Meeting – Guidance Counselors will lead Grade Level Team meetings after school. A Google docs log must be maintained documenting agenda items and discussions. This Google doc needs to be shared with all team members, the Principal and Vice Principal.

Purposes:

1. To discuss students' progress;
2. To identify and develop intervention strategies for underachieving students;
3. To confer with parents;
4. To plan interdisciplinary learning units;
5. To plan field experiences, team projects, assemblies, etc.;
6. To discuss homework, research projects, etc.;
7. To discuss and analyze the standardized testing of students;
8. To discuss program curriculum and students' subject/skill mastery with coordinators, administrators, etc.;
9. To identify and highlight student successes.

Teams Should

1. Agree to be honest with each other;
2. Establish a positive attitude toward the school philosophy, the curriculum, the administration, the students, and each other;
3. Expect work to be more enjoyable rather than easier;
4. Be alert to follow as well as to lead;

5. Be alert to the strengths and weaknesses of each other and plan accordingly;
6. Be aware of different learning styles of students and use appropriate instructional techniques;
7. Evaluate and reevaluate students regularly. Diagnose and prescribe;
8. Modify lessons for students who may need a more individualized approach;
9. Establish comfortable, ordered learning for each student and strive for continuous progress.

ACTIVITY/PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION/STUDENT PLAYGROUND INJURIES

All teachers who are assigned to activity/playground supervision must be on duty supervising students unless an exception has been made by Mr. Desiderio or Mr. Hunt. Teachers or other supervisory personnel are requested to make certain that all areas of the playground are supervised, and we encourage the formation of organized games. Activity rules must be established and all students must know these rules. Teachers are to hold students accountable for rule infractions.

Activity Supervision

Teachers assigned to this duty are assigned to monitor student behavior during the scheduled activity time. When outside, the teacher will clearly identify where the students are playing and the teacher must be able to see all students at all times. Activity should go outside unless the weather is poor.

TEACHER COMMUNICATIONS WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

All parent communications must be documented by the teacher in a communications log. At Valley Middle School, we believe that home/school cooperation is an essential component of students' success in school. We appreciate how influential the parents of our students are, and we recognize them as partners in their children's educational program. When a student is not meeting the behavioral or academic expectations of the teacher and the school, it is expected that the teacher will initiate a home contact and explore with the parent the difficulty that the child is encountering. If a teacher excludes a student from class and refers her/him to the administrator for unacceptable behavior, the teacher must telephone the parents and explain the reasons for the exclusion. Strategies for the elimination of the problem should be mutually developed with the parent and recorded in the communication log. The child's Counselor should be aware of the difficulties, that the teacher is seeking to overcome, and should be viewed by both parent and teacher as a resource.

Parent contact is also expected when a student is making remarkable progress, has demonstrated outstanding citizenship, has earned special recognition, or when a student would benefit from positive reinforcement. Telephone calls, notes, or in-person conferences can be used for this purpose. Please remember that applauding students and sharing praise with parents enhances the children's self-worth and helps maintain parent support. Again, counselors and administrators should be informed of these success cases.

TEACHER ABSENCE/SUBSTITUTE TEACHER PROVISIONS

In the event of absence, the teacher needs to make certain of the following:

1. A current teaching schedule is in the sub folder, and that the plans are readily available to the substitute teacher.
2. Current seating charts are available for all classes.
3. Lesson plans for the day are complete and readily available. Teacher must email if unexpectedly absence by 6:30 a.m. Likewise, any textbooks or materials which are needed

to implement the lesson plans need to be available. When writing lesson plans for a substitute teacher, one needs to remember that the substitute teacher is assuming a teacher's role for the day without the benefit of prior planning. Directions must be explicit.

4. The teacher requests written feedback from the substitute teacher as to what was accomplished, names of discipline problems, helpful students, etc. Please follow-up this report.
5. The teacher prepares his/her students for a possible teacher absence during the year by clearly enunciating to students our expectations for students' behavior in such an event.

Additionally, at the end of the workday, substitute teachers will be requested to submit to the General Office a report on their day's experience at Valley Middle School.

Please be certain that you complete an Emergency card and keep it current with the nurse in each school in which you teach.

SIGN OUT BOOK IN THE GENERAL OFFICE

Teachers are permitted to leave the building only during their lunch period. Please be certain you sign-out if you leave the building during this time. **Reminder:** During unassigned duty period and preps, teachers are required to be in the school and available for duty. Any exception must be approved by administration.

TEACHERS' PLANS

Short and long-term planning is an important part of every teacher's work. Plans assist in that work, and their submission for review will enable us to know what is being taught and when. Therefore, consistent with past procedure, all teachers are asked to submit their plans into Realtime each Monday by 9:00 a.m. for the following week. We ask that plans include the following particulars for each class lesson: NJCCS, Objective(s), Anticipatory Set, Procedures/Activities, Differentiation, Closure, Evaluation/Assessment, Homework, and Materials. Please refer to the following page for guidelines. Mr. Desiderio and Mr. Hunt will review plans, however, plans may also be reviewed by Ms. Baykal or Dr. Manganello.

If a teacher has planned a novel lesson or a class project on a particular day, please invite an administrator or supervisor to visit the class.

**THE OAKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
LESSON PLAN FORMAT**

Date(s) _____

Core Curriculum Content Standards Covered: 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 6.1, 6.3 (example)

Objective(s):

Procedures/Activities:

*Differentiation: (Process, Content, Product)

Evaluation/Assessment:

Homework:

Materials:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

At Valley Middle School, the quest for knowledge needs to be a collective effort, and a sharing of what each learns individually is strongly encouraged. We urge all faculty to remain current by reading professional journals, etc. Please share that which you find valuable. Pertinent and provocative articles will be reprinted and distributed for reading, consideration and reaction. In sharing our learning and our ideas, all of us are demonstrating our commitment not only to our own professional growth, but also the professional growth of our colleagues, and, therefore, our commitment to the continued improvement of education at Valley Middle School.

PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Staff members wishing to take continuing education courses must have achieved tenure in the District. Then follow the steps below:

To register for a course you must complete, submit to Human Resources, and gain approval from the Office of the Superintendent, the Course Registration Approval form. Please remember to submit all requested backup paperwork and allow enough time for this process - a minimum of two weeks.

Upon completion of a course, please complete the Tuition Reimbursement Application and Voucher form. Again, attach all required support documents. Send the completed packet directly to Human Resources.

If coursework taken has resulted in a change in your training level, please complete an Application for Change in Training Level Status form. This form must be sent to Human Resources a minimum of two weeks prior to either the August or January Board of Education meeting.

Throughout the process, please read and follow carefully all instructions on each form to prevent any delays in processing.

WORKSHOPS/CONFERENCES/VISITATIONS

Staff members wishing to attend out-of-district workshops, conferences and visitations must complete the following

1. A Professional Conference Request/Travel Reimbursement form must be submitted for approval from the Superintendent prior to registration and 60 days prior to the event.
2. After attending the event, the faculty member must complete the feedback form and submit it to the school Principal and Board. At that time, the Principal and the faculty member will also discuss what was learned at the workshop/conference/visitation and the means by which the information will be shared.

STUDENT DATA: PERMANENT RECORDS AND OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A student's past history will be useful and, in many cases, critical to a teacher's work. Perhaps, most importantly, this information can help a teacher to ascertain a child's instructional level as well as shed light on the question of which instructional methodologies/approaches have been successful in working with a particular student. Maintaining a permanent record on each student is one way in which this

information is annually communicated to a child's teachers.

Permanent records of all students are alphabetically filed in the Main Office according to the student's surname within his/her grade level. Unless it is being updated or reviewed by a counselor or a teacher, the permanent record of each student **MUST** be kept in the main office. The Conference Room may be used by teachers when they are reviewing these records. ***Under no circumstances should a teacher work with permanent records in a location where a student or a parent can see it. Permanent records should never be left unattended in open view.***

ENSURING SUCCESS FOR *ALL* STUDENTS

“Fair is not treating every child equally. Fair is giving every student what they need, when they need it to grow as far/fast as possible.”

-Carol Ann Tomlinson

Staff should know that there are a number of laws and programs set up to ensure student supports are in place. Students may be struggling for a variety of reasons; some of which may be obvious such as a physical disability and some of which are not so obvious such as cognitive issues or home problems. It is our responsibility as educators to understand each reason and to help address it so that each child is supported socially, emotionally, and academically. Please familiarize yourself with each support and how you can refer students.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

States that we may not discriminate against people with disabilities through limiting their accessibility to those resources, programs, or educational opportunities afforded to the general population.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)

Teachers should know that many students who are enrolled in special education programs are also mainstreamed into academic and special area classes. Teachers who provide instruction to classified students are required to review the IEPs and the summary report for those children. They will be asked to sign a form indicating completion of this review. A teacher should also consult with the child's special education teacher in planning an educational program for the child. Please know that not being or remaining aware of the handicapping conditions of a student that a teacher instructs or supervises amounts to a dereliction of the teacher's professional responsibilities.

PLEASE NOTE: Student testing data is available through subject area coordinators and the school administration. All testing information must remain confidential and never reviewed where students can see it.

SECTION 504

This is the section of the ADA that pertains to physical, medical, or neurological disabilities that significantly impact a major life function such as learning. If a student has such a disability, the parent may refer them to the 504 Committee in order to make a determination of the necessary accommodations. These accommodations must be followed. If you have any questions about this, please speak to the student's guidance counselor.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITHOUT A MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS

Students who are struggling should be able to receive supports by following the proper channels. The typical channels of support are outlined below.

CLASSROOM LEVEL ACCOMMODATIONS

As an educator, you may institute additional classroom level accommodations at any time for a student provided that you believe there is a need for them. ***Students do not need a specific plan to be given extra assistance or strategies to learn within the context of your class.*** In fact, this is a central facet of differentiated instruction. However, even with accommodations, if a student is struggling, please seek assistance utilizing one of the following resources.

INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES (I&RS):

This committee functions as a resource for teachers who are having difficulty with student performance for any reason (behavioral, educational, developmental) and special education students who may have issues not relating to their specific learning disability.

1. *Prior to Making a Referral:* The staff member should try to resolve the issues through classroom-based strategies. All strategies and feedback should be shared with the parent prior to a referral so that they are aware of the difficulties observed. See enclosed strategies checklist.
2. *Making a Referral:* The staff member reaches out to the guidance counselor and provides the Strategies Checklist to include as part of the referral. The guidance counselor will then give them access to a referral form through Google Docs. Once the staff member completes it they notify the guidance counselor.
3. *Background Data Collection:* A case monitor is assigned to the student who will seek out additional information from the referring teacher, team, parents, and student about the nature of the difficulties. A calendar date will be set for the initial team meeting and presentation.
4. *I&RS Meeting:* The team jointly presents the concern(s). The team then brainstorms and creates an initial set of strategies to try to remediate the issue. The recorder on the team will document the strategies and minutes of the meeting.
5. *Data Collection:* The case monitor collects data on the strategies tried and communicates with the team.
6. *Follow Up I&RS Meeting(s):* The team analyzes the data and then strategies are modified until successful strategies are found. The team may also recommend additional referrals to the child study team in the case of a suspected learning disability.

If you suspect that a student has a learning disability:

You should speak with the Guidance Counselor and school administrator about your suspicions and the reasons for them. They will assist you in taking the necessary steps. Please do not diagnose a disability yourself. It is only through proper testing and data analysis by the Child Study Team that a diagnosis can be made.

Special Education - IDEA (The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act): This act pertains to students with specific and significant learning disabilities. The school district has the obligation of finding and assisting any students with learning disabilities. This involves an evaluation by the District's Child Study Team. These students have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) written that

is highly specific to the needs of the child. Once a plan is written, it is law that must be implemented by school professionals.

Staff must take the time to review all student plans for each classified student and sign off on those plans. Any teacher who knowingly does not follow an IEP can be found negligent. Therefore, it is critical to be knowledgeable about each new and updated Individual Education Plan.

**Valley Middle School
Oakland Public Schools
Intervention and Referral Services**

STRATEGIES CHECKLIST

Confidential

Directions: Prior to making an I&RS referral, try some of the following strategies based on the issue(s) the student is presenting. If it is determined that an I&RS referral is needed, document these strategies in the Strategy Chart on the Student Referral Form.

Student		Teacher	
----------------	--	----------------	--

<u>General Strategies</u> ☐ Communication/conferencing with parents ☐ Communication/conferencing with student ☐ Private signal with teacher for help ☐ Simple, concise instructions ☐ Break down multi-step directions/tasks ☐ Chunk material ☐ Visuals (pictures, charts, graphs) ☐ Preferential seating/alternative to sitting at desk ☐ Peer partnering ☐ Extra time on assignments ☐ Extra response time ☐ Repeat/ rephrase directions ☐ Refocusing/redirection ☐ Prompting (physical, verbal, visual) ☐ Study guides/graphic organizers, checklists ☐ Timer ☐ Copy of notes ☐ Use student interests to motivate ☐ Display or provide examples of good work ☐ Encourage verbal participation ☐ Use all modalities when teaching (tactile, auditory, Kinesthetic, visual) ☐ Consult w/ member(s) of I&RS Committee ☐ Other: _____	<u>ELA</u> ☐ Assess reading fluency and comprehension ☐ Provide ample opportunities for reading ☐ Books on level sent home ☐ Index cards/reading window for focusing ☐ Preview text ☐ Clap out syllables ☐ Chunk words into familiar parts ☐ Reread text/books for exposure ☐ Have student retell ☐ Provide opportunities to make connections/model ☐ Word/letter/sound/font/picture sorts, hunts, and puzzles ☐ Tactile approaches to letter formation ☐ Teach words in context ☐ Consult with Reading Specialist ☐ Other: _____
<u>Attention/Social/Behavior/Emotional</u> ☐ Reduce distracting stimuli ☐ Classroom behavior plan ☐ Model and reinforce positive/appropriate behaviors ☐ Clear expectations and consequences ☐ Frequent breaks/allow for movement	<u>Writing</u> ☐ Computer for writing ☐ Dictation/verbal brainstorming ☐ Writing webs/graphs ☐ Writing frame ☐ Brainstorming chart

**Valley Middle School
Oakland Public Schools
Intervention and Referral Services**

☐ Consult with Counselor ☐ Other: _____	☐ Writer's checklist ☐ One-to-one drafting ☐ Provide ample opportunities for writing ☐ Journaling ☐ Consult w/ member(s) of I&RS Committee ☐ Other: _____
<u>Sensory/Tactile/OT</u> ☐ Small pencils/pencils grips/weighted top on pencil ☐ Slant board or large binder for writing tasks ☐ Large lined, raised lines, or highlighted paper ☐ Texture strips, fabric or bracelet ☐ Fidget toys/squeeze balls ☐ Chewing gum(parent permission) ☐ Practice with scissors ☐ Other: _____	<u>Math</u> ☐ Practice drills daily ☐ Manipulatives ☐ Graph paper ☐ Calculator ☐ Reference sheet ☐ Number Line/100s chart ☐ Problems read to student by teacher ☐ Other: _____
<u>Limited Parental Support</u> ☐ Avoid consequences for not completing HW ☐ Allow time/provide extra help in class for completing assignments ☐ Other: _____	<u>Speech/Processing</u> ☐ Repeat question word-for-word, rather than rephrasing ☐ Consult with Speech Therapist ☐ Other: _____
<u>ESL/EL</u> ☐ Use bilingual and/or picture dictionaries ☐ Label classroom materials and areas ☐ Slower pacing/rephrasing/clarification/directions in smaller chunks/simplify language not content ☐ Extended wait time ☐ Pair up with a peer buddy ☐ Other: _____	<u>Other</u> ☐ _____ ☐ _____ ☐ _____

Comments:
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CHILD ABUSE CODE

All school staff are responsible for reporting suspected child abuse directly to the proper authorities -- specifically to Department of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P). On weekdays until 5 p.m., suspected child abuse should be reported to DCP&P at (201) 487-5380 (Bergen County). On weekends and evenings after 5 p.m., please report to DCP&P at (800) 792-8610. Also calls can also be reported to 1-877-NJ-Abuse.

The State code governing child abuse is very specific and must be followed. Therefore, we are detailing the requirements of the law. The State requires that:

District boards of education shall adopt policies and procedures for the reporting and the cooperation with **Department of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P)** in investigations of child abuse.

District policies and procedures shall:

1. Include provisions requiring school personnel, compensated and uncompensated (volunteer), to immediately report to DCP&P incidents of child abuse. The person reporting the alleged child abuse shall inform the school Principal or his or her designee of the report after the DCP&P referral has been made. However, notice to the principal or his or her designee need not be given when the person believes that such notice would be likely to endanger the referrer or child(ren) involved or when the person believes that such disclosure would be likely to result in retaliation against the child or in discrimination against the referrer with respect to his or her employment.

School personnel having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to child abuse or acts of child abuse as defined under N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.9 shall immediately report to DCP&P (see N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10). When referring cases to DCP&P, the school referrer shall provide, when possible, the following information:

The name of the child

- i. The age and grade of the child
 - ii. The name and address of the child's parent or guardian or other person having custody and control (for example, foster parent)
 - iii. A description of the child's condition, including any available information concerning current or previous injuries, abuse, or maltreatment and including any evidence of previous injuries
 - iv. The nature and possible extent of the child's injuries, abuse, or maltreatment
 - v. Any other pertinent information that the referrer believes may be relevant with respect to the child abuse and/or to the identity of the alleged perpetrator
2. Include a statement indicating the importance of early identification of child abuse
 3. Provide assurances that no school personnel will be discharged from employment or in any manner discriminated against as a result of making in good faith a report or causing to be reported an allegation of child abuse (see N.J. S.A. 9:6-8.13)
 4. Require procedures for the following:
 - i. District cooperation with DCP&P in investigations of child abuse that has occurred at

- any time outside or within the confines of the school or during a school-related function
 - ii. District action as defined in N.J.S.A. 9:6-3.1 in response to the findings at each stage of the investigation process as it affects the child(ren) and the school personnel
 - iii. Release of the child(ren) from the school
 - iv. Transfer of the child(ren) between schools
5. Provide for the establishment of a liaison to DCP&P from the District Board of Education.
(Note: Oakland Schools Liaison is Mr. Sean Bowe.)

The function of the liaison is to:

- i. Facilitate communication and cooperation between the district and DCP&P.
 - ii. Act as the primary contact person between the schools and DCP&P with regard to the general information sharing and the development of mutual training and other cooperative efforts.
6. Include provisions for the delivery of information and in-service training programs to school personnel concerning child abuse, instructional methods and techniques relative to issues of child abuse in the local curriculum, and personnel responsibilities pursuant to N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10 et seq.
7. Detail the responsibilities of the district board of education as follows:
- i. Permit the DCP&P investigator to interview the child(ren) in the presence of the school principal or his or her designee. If the child(ren) is intimidated by the presence of the school representative, the child(ren) shall name a staff member, whom he or she feels will be supportive, who will be allowed to accompany the child during the interview. The purpose of including a school representative is to provide comfort and support to the child, not to participate in the investigation.
 - ii. Cooperate with DCP&P in scheduling interviews with any school personnel who may have information relevant to the investigation
 - iii. Release, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:36-19 and N.J.A.C. 6:3-2, all pupil records of the child(ren) under investigation that are deemed to be relevant to the assessment of treatment of child abuse (see N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.40)
 - iv. Maintain and secure all confidential information about child abuse cases in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:36-10 and N.J.A.C. 6:3-2
 - v. Permit DCP&P to physically remove pupils from school during the course of a school day when it is necessary to protect the child or take the child to a service provider. Such removal shall take place once the principal or his or her designee has been provided, either in advance or at the time removal is sought, with appropriate authorization as specified in N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.27 through 8:30
 - vi. Cooperate with DCP&P when it is necessary to remove the child(ren) from his or her home for proper care and protection and when such removal results in the transfer of the child to a school other than the one in which he or she is enrolled
 - vii. Provide due process rights to school personnel who have been reassigned or suspended in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A: 6-10 et seq., 18A:25-6, and N.J.S. A. 9:6-3.1. Temporary reassignment or suspension of school personnel alleged to have committed an act of child abuse shall occur if there is reasonable cause to believe that the life or health of the alleged victim or other children is in imminent danger due to continued contact between the school personnel and a child (see N.J.S.A. 18A:6-10 et seq, and N.J.S.A. 9:6-3.1)

OTHER DETAILS

SCHOOL EVENT CALENDAR

Valley Middle School maintains a building calendar that contains all special programs, evening activities, field trips, and important planning information pertaining to each event. Make certain that major team events are entered on the school calendar. Note that if there is a conflict on the calendar date, that conflict must be resolved prior to announcing the program date.

Know that the Principal's secretary is responsible for obtaining approval for scheduling evening events from the Superintendent's Office, where a Master Schedule of the District's evening school events are maintained. A conflict with another school's event may require a date change to avoid parents who have children at more than one school from being placed in a difficult situation.

TELEPHONE INFORMATION

Please learn the following telephone numbers:

Valley Middle School:	201-337-8185
Oakland Board of Education Administration Office:	
Superintendent's Office	201-337-6156
Business Office	201-337-6810

TELEPHONE/CELL PHONE USE - STUDENTS

(Teachers must review this policy with students.) Students are permitted to bring cell phones to school, but must keep them off and in their lockers or backpacks from 7:53 a.m. until their dismissal. Students who violate this policy will have their cell phones taken away and returned to the student's parent/guardian.

TELEPHONE/CELL PHONE USE - FACULTY AND STAFF

All faculty and staff members are to keep cell phones and other electronic communication devices off while instructing or supervising students. Such devices are to be used in faculty workrooms, outside the school building or in classrooms that are unoccupied by students. In the event of an emergency, incoming calls will be received through the Main Office and staff members will be notified. Faculty members will not be called out of class to accept telephone calls unless they are of an emergency nature. It is presumed that all members of Valley Middle School's faculty and staff will cooperate with this policy governing use of the school telephone and cell phone procedures.

PETTY CASH

Before expenditures are made for which you expect reimbursement, **prior approval from Mr.**

Desiderio is required. Upon approval, complete the required form and submit to

Ms. O'Dell. **All** receipts must be attached to the Petty Cash Form, found in the main office.

Expenditures are not to exceed \$50.00. Only Mr. Desiderio or Mr. Hunt will approve the disbursement of petty cash funds. Please note that reimbursing sales tax is illegal in the State of New Jersey. However, staff can obtain a tax exemption letter from the business office prior to making purchases.

COLLECTION OF MONIES

No money is to be left in a classroom. Please send all collections to Ms. O'Dell before the end of the day so that it can be locked in the safe.

TEXTBOOKS

CLASSROOM TEXTBOOKS

Some textbooks may not be issued to students; however, students may use them in the classroom (e.g., English grammar textbooks). Teachers must carefully monitor these textbooks to make certain they are not removed from the classroom without being "checked-out" to the student. Please make certain you record the loan and the return of these texts.

CURRICULUM

CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS

Teachers can access the district's curriculum on the district website, www.oaklandschoolsnj.org.

PACING CHARTS

Pacing charts have been developed for the implementation of the curriculum. These charts serve as a guide to teachers and provide direction for the sequence and length of time for each topic. Please know that a textbook is a tool to use in the implementation of a curriculum. It is neither the curriculum nor the pacing chart.

FORMATIVE/SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Curriculum committees have developed formative and summative assessments for the curriculum. Formative assessments are ongoing interim measures that determine if students are learning the content. The results of formative assessments inform the teacher whether a unit, or a lesson, needs to be retaught to an entire class, a group of students, or a single student. In essence, it informs the teacher whether learning has occurred.

A summative assessment informs the teacher whether the students have achieved the objectives for the curriculum in that grade, and whether they have retained that which they learned.

FIELD TRIPS, TEAM PROJECTS, ASSEMBLIES, OTHER SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Field trips, team projects, assemblies, and other special programs are scheduled to reinforce learning and enrich our educational programs. Historically, they have provided unique learning opportunities for students and the planning of such experiences is encouraged. However, it is important that such projects be centrally coordinated to reduce the possibility of scheduling overlap and to diminish the possibility that such programs will detract from the educational program. Therefore, all plans for these programs must be reviewed and approved by and scheduled with Mr. Desiderio. Appropriate forms and details should be provided to Mr. Desiderio when making an appointment to discuss the proposed project and the school calendar should be reviewed by the staff member for a date that minimizes disruption of instruction.

ASSEMBLIES

Prior to the school's first assembly program, all teachers are asked to review appropriate/inappropriate behavior with their students. This discussion should include the following points:

1. Students will proceed to the Cafetorium in two lines and in a quiet, orderly manner.
2. Students are to sit together as a class with their teacher.
3. Once in the Cafetorium, students are to sit in the seat to which they are directed.
4. Students may demonstrate their appreciation of the performance, etc., by applauding. No cheering, whistling, shouting or stamping of feet is permitted.
5. Students who do not like a performance should sit silently. No disruptive behavior is permitted.
6. Upon conclusion of the program, students should remain seated until each row is dismissed.
7. At all times, students should be respectful and considerate of guests and performers.
8. If students are disruptive in any way, a teacher direct the student to the Main Office and explain to an administrator the reason for the student's referral.

Each teacher is required to remain at all assembly programs unless directed otherwise. By doing so, teachers will be interspersed throughout the audience and in a better position to stop inappropriate behavior.

SPECIAL PROGRAM PROCEDURES

1. Planning for all special programs is to be done in conjunction with the Vice Principal. When it has been officially established that a special program is relevant to the curriculum of the students, the coordinating teacher will discuss all pertinent details with the Vice Principal. All needs shall be identified and logistics planned. The Vice Principal and the coordinating teacher will present the proposed program to the Principal, who shall give final approval for all programs and all guest speakers.
2. Once the Principal has approved the event, the date will be recorded on the school calendar. An invitation will be sent to the Superintendent, if appropriate. All staff should be made aware of the program.
3. Custodial staff will be apprised of the date, time and place. Forms for cafetorium usage should be submitted, if this room is needed for the program.

POLICY

Oakland Board of Education

Section: Students
5511. DRESS AND GROOMING
Date Created: January 2023
Date Edited: January 2023

5511. DRESS AND GROOMING

The schools of the Oakland School District are workplaces for the students of this district. Just as adults dress appropriately for their work environments, students need to dress appropriately for school. School dress should reflect a seriousness of purpose, an appreciation of the importance of health and safety, respect for oneself and others, and an understanding that the Board maintains high expectations for student achievement.

The Board of Education, therefore, establishes the following guidelines for student dress in school and urges all parents to assist in providing the students with an academic environment that is safe, conducive to learning, and supportive of high achievement.

District Guidelines for Student Dress

1. All attire should be neat, clean, reflect modesty, and be appropriate for a school environment;
2. Apparel shall not be sheer, brief, low cut, or revealing so as to be embarrassing, distracting, or indecent;
3. Shorts or short-like apparel may be worn during hot weather, but they must be neatly hemmed and long enough to ensure modesty;
4. Exposure of undergarments is unacceptable. Cutoffs or frayed bottoms are not permitted, and shorts with distracting or suggestive words/images on them are not acceptable for school. Neither are lycra/spandex shorts permitted in school;
5. Shirts with excessively low cut arm holes are not to be worn. Short shirts which leave the stomach area/midriff exposed are unsafe and not acceptable in school. Also, halter tops and spaghetti strap tops are not permitted;
6. Footwear is required; however, beach thongs or flip flops are unsafe in a school environment and are not permitted;
7. Hats, caps, or other headwear shall not be worn inside the school building;
8. Unless required for a medical reason, sunglasses may not be worn during school;
9. Graphics that are suggestively obscene or promote/depict an illegal substance on any garment are prohibited (e.g., alcohol, drugs, lewdness, profanity).
10. Gang related clothing is prohibited.

The building administrator is responsible for enforcing the dress code. Each Principal shall enforce school regulations prohibiting student dress or grooming practices that:

1. Present a hazard to the health or safety of the student themselves or to others in the school;
2. Materially interfere with schoolwork, create disorder, or disrupt the educational program;
3. Cause excessive wear or damage to school property;
4. Prevent the student from achieving their own educational objectives because of blocked vision or restricted movement.

The Principal or designee shall have discretion in determining dress code violations. Exceptions to the dress code requirements may take effect for religious and/or medical reasons.

Appropriate consequences will be issued for violation. Repeat offenders will result in parental notification and possible exclusion from school. A parent may be contacted to bring appropriate attire to school before a student is permitted to return to class.

N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1; 18A:11-7; 18A:11-8; 18A:11-9

Adopted: 17 January 2023

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

PROFESSIONAL USAGE

We are continuing to develop our professional library for use by faculty. Current research in the various disciplines and in the professions is constantly being sought. Recommendations that you may have for additions to our professional library should be given to the Librarian/Media Specialist. Articles, etc., which are recommended for faculty reading may be obtained at the library desk. The library staff will make every attempt to meet faculty needs for library books. Donations of current textbooks and professional books are welcome.

In order to better control the circulation of the professional library, it is located in the Media Center. Please see the Librarian/Media Specialist for circulation procedures. Upon completion of using the book, please return it to the Library. As in the past, the Librarian/Media Specialist will monitor the circulation of all books.

CLASS USAGE

Any teacher may schedule a class for library study with Ms. Englishman. The study should dovetail with class projects. Additionally, the librarian may teach certain skills through reading/English classes. Sixth grade students study library skills as a special area.

Teachers who have a need to use the Library for their classes are asked to please check/discuss with the Librarian/Media Specialist any needs they have in this regard in order to schedule mutually convenient dates and appropriate instruction.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/SEXUAL HARASSMENT

STAFF

The Oakland Board of Education has adopted an Affirmation Action/Sexual Harassment Policy (File Code: 4111.1, 4211.1), which "guarantees to all persons equal access to all categories and conditions of employment, retention and advancement regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, political affiliation, marital status affectional or sexual orientation, or handicap". Policy further states "The Board shall maintain a working environment that is free discrimination, including, but not limited to, sexual harassment."

Staff may file a formal grievance related to sexual harassment with the Superintendent of Schools. In the Oakland School District, the Affirmative Action Officer is Robyn Greenwald, Principal, Heights School, 114 Seminole Avenue, Oakland, N.J. Questions and/or concerns regarding affirmative action policy should be directed to the Affirmative Action Officer.

STUDENTS

Ensuring Equal Opportunity for All Students

Equal Educational Opportunity

**File Code 5145.4
Policy**

Students should receive equal and bias-free access to all school facilities, courses, programs, activities

and services. This assures them maximum opportunity to achieve their potential regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, nationality, place of residence within the District, socioeconomic status, or disability. Teachers are expected to create positive and wholesome relationships with students and to maintain an inclusive and positive classroom environment.

Staff members must promote a learning environment that encourages fulfillment of each pupil's potential in regard to his/her program, consistent with District goals and optimal opportunities for pupils. This goal may be reached by adapting instruction to individual needs through differentiation of instruction while emphasizing inclusion, high standards, and fairness for all.

Students must also respect the rights of other children and not impede their ability in pursuing an education. Staff members are expected to maintain high standards of respect between students and to confront any and all incidents where one student interferes with the learning of another.

Faculty members are also instructed to make certain that student behavioral standards are enforced, which will protect the rights of all students and will not constitute sexual harassment. Specific behaviors which may be interpreted as sexual harassing at school are: sexual name calling, touching, spreading sexual rumors, gestures, cartoons/pictures, cornering, jokes about sexuality and sexual orientation, and pulling at clothes. At Valley Middle School, students need to understand that acceptance of and respect for each other is expected at all times.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The VMS Parent-Teacher Organization is the school's parent association. It aims to support the school's goals, enhance the school program, and form a partnership between home and school.

The PTO has monthly meetings in the VMS Library. The Executive Board of the PTO is elected annually. A VMS teacher serves as liaison to the PTO and has a place on the Executive Board. The Principal and Vice-Principal are also Board Members. All Faculty members are invited to attend PTO meetings.

The PTO derives its financial support from annual dues paid by school staff and parents. Additional fundraising campaigns occur during the year. The proceeds from these fundraising efforts defray the expenses of grade-level theme days, other programs, social events for the students, mailing of the school newsletter, and the eighth grade graduation dance.