

Mystic Valley Regional Charter School



2014-2015

Student - Parent Handbook

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SCHOOL OVERVIEW

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School is to provide the opportunity of a world-class education characterized by a well-mannered, disciplined and structured academic climate. Central to Mystic Valley’s academic environment is the incorporation of selected core virtues and the fundamental ideals of our American Culture, which are embodied in the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution.

The ultimate goals of the school are the following:

- To demonstrate the heights of academic achievement that public schools can routinely attain when the advantages of charter school governance are coupled with high academic standards.
- To offer area families choices in public school education.
- To create new professional opportunities for teachers allowing them to succeed.
- To graduate well-educated, civic-minded adults who are capable of thoughtful, logical reasoning.

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School will meet this mission statement through the three following principles:

An Effective Academic Design

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School provides an opportunity of a world class education for children of all ages in a respectful, structured and academic learning environment using the incorporation of the following school design components:

Academic Placement and Performance Monitoring

- Use of the Appropriate Instructional Grouping Models

Instruction in Reading and Math is implemented through the use of ability-level instructional groups in grades K-6. Instructional groups are developed through the use of quantitative assessments that measure academic skills in the subjects mentioned above in accordance with the school’s curriculum matrix. In grades K-6, instructional groups for other subject areas are developed using a heterogeneous model. Ability-level groups are utilized for Math in grades 7-8. High school students receive instruction through three curriculum strata. They are College Prep, Honors and High Honors, which evolves into the International Baccalaureate Program in grades 11 and 12.

- Frequent Performance Monitoring for Each Instructional Group

Frequent monitoring of each instructional group is conducted in order to determine individual student progress in the successful attainment of academic performance standards. The standards used are based on the school’s internally developed learning and performance rubrics.

Curriculum

- Research- Based Curriculum Models:

A master curriculum plan is used. The design of the plan was developed through the blending of carefully chosen teaching and learning designs that reflect Mystic Valley's core academic values.

- Measurable Learning Standards:

The structure and scope of the curriculum is comprised of specific learning standards that are delivered consistently, systematically and uniformly through an instructional process that operates in an academic environment and is conducive to frequent instructional and curricular monitoring.

- Frequent Monitoring of the Curriculum:

The monitoring of curriculum progress is conducted in a centralized, systematic fashion on a weekly, monthly and annual basis. Monitoring is specifically focused on the pace of lesson delivery, targeted curriculum objectives taught and student academic progress as measured through internal and external assessments and performance rubrics.

High Academic Expectations

Quality Instruction Based on Research-Proven Methods Supported Through Intense Training and On-Going Support

- Best-Practice Research:

Instructional methodology is based on best-practice research and applies specifically to the unique curricula designs that comprise the school's main curriculum plan spanning grades K-12.

- Curriculum-Specific Training for Instructional Faculty:

Successful introductory, intermediate and advanced training, specific to the areas of individual expertise, is required for all members of the faculty. Areas of training include best-practice techniques in classroom management.

Incorporation Of Value-Based Character Education

The school will promote and incorporate values that are embodied in both the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.

Character Education

- School Climate Based on Key Virtues Taught in Character Education:

Character education is an important part of the K-12 curriculum at Mystic Valley. It is the first class taught each school day in all grades. Core virtues, important civic-oriented values particularly those embodied in the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution and positive character traits are the major objectives of the curriculum. Instructional methods vary in accordance with age and grade-appropriate curricular models.

Classroom Management

- Uniform Approach to Classroom Management:

All faculty and staff, throughout all grade levels, uniformly implement a single student conduct and general school and classroom management strategy that are based on the principles taught in the Character Education program. An assertive discipline approach is used in conjunction with positive reinforcement strategies. The roles and responsibilities of parents in support for the behavioral standards that are expected in the general plan are highly valued.

LEADERSHIP

The school's highly skilled and experienced leadership team is eager to serve you and your child. The education of your child is the School's highest priority, so we hope you will contact the School's leaders with any questions or concerns:

Mr. Martin Trice – *Director*

E-mail: mtrice@mvracs.org

Mr. Christopher J. Finn –*Assistant Director, K-8*

E-mail: cfinn@mvracs.org

Mr. Alex Dan – *Assistant Director, 9-12*

E-mail: adan@mvracs.org

Mrs. Gina McKinnon –*Professional Development Coordinator (K-2), ELL Coordinator*

E-mail: gmckinnon@mvracs.org

Mrs. Jennifer Mullen –*Professional Development Coordinator (3-6)*

E-mail: jmullen@mvracs.org

Mr. Richard Veilleux –*Business Manager and Title IX Coordinator*

E-mail: rveilleux@mvracs.org

Mrs. Kathy Kinnon, *Special Education Director and Section 504 Coordinator*

E-mail: kkinnon@mvracs.org

Ms. Dawn Wood, *Civil Rights Coordinator*

E-mail: dwood@mvracs.org

Mr. Jeffery Zajac, *High School Dean*

E-mail: jzajac@mvracs.org

Mr. Thomas Eighmey, *Lower School Dean*

E-mail: teighmey@mvracs.org

OTHER IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

Attendance Line

Main School Number: 781.388.0222
(follow prompts)

School Nurse's Office

Kindergarten: 781.388.0222 ext. 2007
Main Building (1,3, 4-6): 781.388.0222 ext. 7010
Annex Building (2, 7-8): 781.388.0222 ext. 3024
High School: 781.388.0222 ext. 4108

GOVERNANCE

A Board of Trustees governs the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School. The Board conducts open meetings each month. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to attend.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The school's instructional day begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. No student will be admitted into the school building before 7:20 a.m. No student should be on school property before 7:20 a.m. or after 3:30 p.m. without the permission of a school official.

We offer a longer school day (7-1/2 hours) and school year (200 instructional days) than traditional district schools. As a result, when compared to district public schools, our students will receive more than three additional "years" of instruction from kindergarten through grade 12.

STUDENT CONDUCT

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School recognizes that effective instruction requires an orderly environment focused on learning, and that schools have an important role to play in supporting parents' efforts to teach basic values to their children. The School's Code of Values clearly defines expectations for student conduct. Our program focuses on these important values: responsibility, perseverance, respect, kindness, honesty, citizenship, courage, self-discipline, gratitude, generosity, forgiveness and hope. Parents and guardians can help reinforce such lessons by talking about these values at home and modeling these in their daily life.

The Code of Values is included in Section 10 of this handbook. The Code should be read thoroughly and discussed with your child. The compact of the last page should then be signed and returned to your child's homeroom teacher to indicate that you understand and agree to accept and support the School's rules and expectations. Students are also asked to sign the form.

In addition to the expectations described in the Code of Values, the following rules apply in every classroom, in the support areas and at all school events:

- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Be at an appropriate learning position at all times. For grades K-6, we call this the learner position (seated with feet flat on the floor and hands folded on your desk). For grades 7-12, we expect students to be sitting upright and paying attention at all times.
- Keep hands, feet, and voices to yourself.
- Get attention the right way.
- Transition quickly and quietly.
- Be prepared for each class and activity
- Speak to classmates and adults in a respectful manner.

Helping your child meet these expectations will facilitate the creation of a safe and orderly learning environment.

SECTION 1: CURRICULUM DESIGN

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School offers a highly structured, researched based curriculum that sets high expectations. Through the use of our curriculum mapping system, our curriculum is monitored by our Curriculum Leaders Team for any issues that may prevent our student from achieving the ambitious goals that we have set for them. The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School will provide a strong academic foundation for your child that will prepare your child for the demanding academic program that we will implement in grades 9-12.

INTERNATIONAL BACCAULAREATE

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School was granted authorization by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) of Geneva, Switzerland to grant the distinguished International Baccalaureate Diploma to graduating seniors beginning in 2007. Mystic Valley became the first public school in the Metro Boston area, and the second among all Boston-area schools, to be recognized by the IBO. The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is a two-year, college-preparatory course of study that is highly regarded for its academic rigor by universities around the world.

Critical thinking, international understanding and exposure to a variety of points of view are emphasized throughout the Diploma Programme's curriculum. Worldwide standards of learning and achievement are established by the organization. Courses are taught in English, French or Spanish in selected schools around the globe. Throughout nearly 40 years of operation, the IBO has demonstrated that students and teachers benefit from these challenging criterion-referenced benchmarks. Students have proven to be well prepared for university work. Subsequently, acceptance rates to the nation's most selective colleges are significantly higher for students who have earned the International Baccalaureate Diploma. Teachers have benefited from the required instructional training and the diverse array of professional development opportunities provided by the IBO.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION IN ELEMENTARY READING AND LANGUAGE ARTS K-6

Direct Instruction (DI) is a curriculum and teaching methodology specifically designed to teach sophisticated strategies in reading, language, and other basic skill areas, such as spelling and cursive writing. The lessons are presented in a structured sequence, with each building on concepts and skills developed previously in the series. Parents are encouraged to contact their children's teachers for detailed information about the skills and knowledge taught at each level of the various DI programs. Direct Instruction has been proven to yield strong results with all types of students, including academically advanced children, average performers, and those with special needs.

SAXON MATH

Mystic Valley uses Saxon Math for its math program. Saxon Math was chosen for its excellent record of increased achievement scores on standardized tests.

ABILITY GROUPINGS

To ensure that *all* students are permitted to succeed, every child is assessed prior to beginning instruction in reading (K-6) and math (K-12). Instructional groupings are created based on student's demonstrated competency in these areas. Students who are performing below target receive instruction that ensures that they fill any learning gaps quickly and then accelerate. Likewise, students who are advanced in a subject receive instruction at a level and pace that provide an optimal challenge.

CORE KNOWLEDGE K-8

To provide students with a sturdy foundation on which to build future success, the School's curricula in grades K-8 for science, history, language arts, character education, music, art, and math are based on coherent and ambitious standards based on what students need to learn from the earliest grades. The Core Knowledge Sequence was developed by the Core Knowledge Foundation in Charlottesville, VA as a way to promote fairness and excellence in learning. The Core Knowledge Sequence provides MVRCS with a detailed outline of specific content to be taught in all core subjects. The specific content in the Sequence provides a coherent and sequential foundation of learning on which to build skills instruction. The Sequence leaves ample room for meeting state requirements. MVRCS has aligned the Massachusetts State Frameworks with our Core Knowledge Sequence and other curricula. We have compiled Curriculum Maps for each grade, are reviewed each year and are available upon request.

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM 9-12

The High School programs offered at Mystic Valley Regional Charter School are designed to meet the needs of all children.

Overview

Guiding Principles:

- A 9-12 school with an emphasis on core academics
- Academic excellence and high expectations for all students
- Continued parental involvement
- Teacher directed instruction with strategies that insure prompt remediation and/or acceleration, depending on each individual student's needs
- The implementation of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB) in grades 11-12
- The acquisition of an in-depth knowledge base in ideas, science, history, politics, global geography and cultures, language and literature, the arts, the self, and society.
- Excellence in reading, writing, mathematics, critical thinking, and the use of technology
- Respect for self and others

Course of Study:

Each student's program of study will have a strong academic core including mathematics, science, language arts and history. All science, mathematics, language arts, and history courses listed will be offered to all students.

- 5 units of foreign language, including at least 1 unit of Spanish and 1 unit of Latin
- 4 units of English
- 4 units of history
- 4 units of mathematics
- 4 units of science
- 1 unit of Integrated Technology
- **150 hours of community service**

Students at the High School will have three levels of classes available to them: College Prep, Honors and High Honors (IB for grades 11 and 12). Placement into each level will be decided by the prior year's grades, teacher recommendations and parental input. Students achieving a B+ or higher in a level will be encouraged to move up a level for the following year. Conversely, students achieving a C or lower will be encouraged to move down a level for the following year.

For grades 7-12, students achieving marks greater than an A- in all subjects will be nominated for High Honors. For grades 7-12, students achieving marks greater than a B- in all subjects will be nominated for the Honor Roll.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

Community Service is a graduation requirement for all students. A minimum of **150** hours is expected (**40 freshman**

+ 40 sophomore + 40 junior + 30 senior). For freshmen, sophomores and juniors, the entire 40 hours of community service must be completed on or before July 15. Failure to do so will result in the student not being promoted to the next grade. For seniors, the entire 30 hours of community service must be completed prior to their graduation. Failure to do so will result in the student not graduating.

In order to prepare seventh and eighth grade students for the high school community service program's expectations students are required to complete a smaller amount of time engaged in service projects. Seventh grade students must spend five hours engaged in community service activities, while eighth grade students are expected to complete ten hours of work. Failure to do so by July 15 may result in retention.

SECTION 2: GENERAL POLICIES

SOLICITATION

Solicitation of or by any student, parent, or staff member on School property for any cause except those authorized by the School Director is strictly prohibited.

MONEY AND OTHER VALUABLE PROPERTY

Students are expected to leave all money and other valuable property at home. The School assumes no responsibility for the loss or theft of such articles.

LOCKERS/CUBBIES/BACKPACKS

All children will have the use of a cubby or a locker. Lockers cannot be locked in grades K-6. The school will provide locks for grade 7-12 lockers. Lockers and cubbies are the property of the school and as such may be inspected by school authorities at any time. Backpacks must be stored in the lockers/cubbies and cannot be carried from class to class. Backpacks must fit into the locker provided by the school. Backpacks may not have writing or pictures that would be deemed distracting or inappropriate.

BIRTHDAY POLICY

If you desire to celebrate your child's birthday in school with a special treat or prize, please communicate with the classroom teacher two weeks prior to the day/event for approval due to wellness and allergy concerns. If you arrange such an event, all students must be included. Please be aware of the school's policies on candy and soda (which are not allowed). Teachers and staff will adhere to and enforce the school policy of having the student consume the safe snack provided by his/her parent when food is brought into the classroom by another family/parent. This would include parties, celebration and field trips. This would also include the school sponsored meal program as that food is provided by an outside vendor. For food brought into the classroom by the school, such as with a classroom reward, the teacher and nurse will ensure the food is safe for the student.

CANDY, SODA, GUM, AND TOYS

Students may not bring candy, soda, gum, trading cards, toys (including stuffed animals), or other non-school related items to school unless approved by the administration. The student assumes responsibility for any items brought from home. Toy weapons, headphones, iPods, MP3 Players, radios, games, virtual pets, etc., are not allowed on school property. Students may be subject to the confiscation of these items and disciplinary action.

STUDENT DEPARTURE

Children who are not enrolled in the School's after school program or staying with a school employee for educational purposes are not permitted on School grounds after 3:30p.m.. If a child is left at or returned to the school after hours, the parent or emergency contact will be called to arrange for pick-up. If a parent, legal guardian, or authorized adult cannot be reached by 6:00p.m., the police will be notified. The school also reserves the right to contact the local office of the Department of Children and Families. Beginning with the fifth late pickup and for every subsequent late pickup, the parent will be charged a fee of twenty-five dollars. The student will be ineligible for any extracurricular activities until the fee is paid.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School will contract a third party to provide after school care for those parents requesting it. More information is available at the school's office.

POLICY ON EDUCATING PREGNANT STUDENTS

No students shall be excluded from any school program or school-sponsored activity because of pregnancy except that, if the school has safety or welfare concerns for the pregnant student relating to participation in sports, the school shall so inform the student and may request the student to obtain a physician's approval.

OCCUPATIONAL VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The school will provide training for the Team Chairperson(s) regarding vocational and occupational options and services which relate to affording students with disabilities the skills and aptitude necessary to transition to adult life and work, as appropriate to the educational level and age of the students. The school will assure that individual student's educational team considers the student's need for such services at the time of each annual review meeting.

EDUCATIONAL SURROGATE PARENT POLICY

Mystic Valley Regional Charter School (MVRCS) willfully complies with the Educational Surrogate Parent Program (ESP Program) which exists in response to a federal special education law, the IDEA. MVRCS recognizes that the Department of Education is required to implement procedures to protect the rights of children entitled to special education services who are in the custody of the DSS (a ward of the state), or whose parent or guardian cannot be identified.

Upon receipt of the ESP Program appointment letter, MVRCS acknowledges that the assigned ESP has authority to provide for consent for evaluations and make other decisions regarding special education matters. The school will only communicate with the ESP regarding any special education matters. Appropriate school staff will be made aware of the above appointments of the ESP.

Furthermore, MVRCS acknowledges that if a court appoints a guardian *ad litem* (GAL) or educational advocate with special education decision making authority, and the parent had been making special education decisions for the child, the parent no longer has the right to ask for medication, consent to evaluations, to sign the Individualized Education/504 Accommodation Plan, or request a hearing to resolve special education disputes.

BUILDING ACCESSIBILITY

Mystic Valley Regional Charter School ensures that all campus buildings are accessible to all students. Building-specific procedures are as follows:

High School

- 306 Highland Ave.: A chairlift is located at the rear, center entrance of the building, off of the parking lot. The lift provides physical accessibility to the lower and first levels of the building. In the event that a student or parent with challenged mobility requires access to classes on other floors of the building, entire classes are moved in order to meet specific needs. Access for study halls may also be provided in a study carrel in the Dean of Students' office.
- Emerson: An elevator is available to reach all floors of the building. Access is gained through a separate entrance located adjacent to the building's north entrance.

Lower School

- 576 Eastern Avenue: an elevator is available to reach all floors of the building. Access is gained through a separate entrance located adjacent to the building's south entrance.
- 770 Salem Street: an elevator is available to reach all floors of the building. Access is gained through a separate entrance located adjacent to the building's east entrance (fishbowl).
- 30 Laurel Street: in the event that a student or parent with challenged mobility requires access to classes on other floors of the building, entire classes are moved in order to meet specific needs.

ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS/DISMISSAL POLICY

ATTENDANCE

Instruction at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School begins promptly at 8:00a.m. It is critical that all students be prepared to begin at that time. A student who is late misses valuable instructional time, and conveys an unacceptable lack of regard for the School. Those electing to participate in the school's breakfast program must arrive at 7:40 a.m.

TARDINESS

Any student who arrives to their homeroom at 8:00 a.m. or later must report to the front office. The student will be considered tardy and the incident will be recorded. If a K-8 student arrives late, the parent must walk the child into the school to sign them in. For high school students arriving late, a note from the parent is required. During any given quarter, when a student reaches their fifth tardy, they will be given a detention for that tardy and each subsequent tardy. Parents could be asked to attend a conference with a member of the leadership team, or their delegate, to discuss the reasons for the excessive tardiness. Transportation for children who attend detention is the parent's responsibility. All tardiness will be factored in the total time missed from school for the year. **A ratio of 3:1 will be used. Every three tardies for any reason will count as one absence.**

EARLY DISMISSAL

If it is necessary for a student to be dismissed from school before the end of the school day, parents must notify the school office no later than 9:00 a.m. the day of the early dismissal. In such cases, parents must inform the School of the specific time that the child will be picked-up and the person who will come for the child. Dismissal between 3:00pm and 3:30pm is NOT permitted. Only adults who are listed in the School's records as being authorized will be allowed to take students from the School in these cases, unless a note is sent in. Individuals not recognized by the office staff will be required to show identification proving their identity. K-8 students may not be dismissed to themselves. High school students may be dismissed by themselves with prior written parental permission. **A ratio of 3:1 will be used. Every three dismissals for any reason will count as one absence.**

ABSENCES

Parents must contact the School office by phone whenever a child is going to be absent, and send a written excuse (such as a doctor's note) to the teacher when the child returns to school. The School has a dedicated phone line for all calls related to attendance for K-12: 781.388.0222 (follow prompts). Parents are encouraged to use the extension 24 hours a day at their convenience to report absences at the main campus.

ABSENCES: MAKE UP WORK POLICY WITH ADVANCE NOTICE

For Grades K-6:

If a child is going to be absent for a consecutive period of time AND there is advance notice, the only areas of curricula to be handed out ahead of time will be Language Arts and Math. All homework assignments are due the day upon return.

Missed tests and assessments in Language Arts and Math shall be made up the day of the child's return. The teacher will determine the administration of the tests. All other subject areas (Spanish, History, Science, etc.) are the responsibility of the child and parent. The student will have the number of days they were absent to make up any missed class work, assessments, and tests.

Assignments, projects and tests that are assigned prior to advanced absence are due or completed upon their return.

For Grades 7- 12:

If a child is going to be absent for a consecutive period of time AND there is advance notice, each subject teacher will give the projected homework assignments to the student prior to prolonged absence. All homework assignments are due the day upon return. Any missed tests and assessments will be made up the day of the child's return. All class work will be made up upon return.

Assignments, projects and tests that are assigned prior to advanced absence are due or completed upon their return.

ABSENCES: MAKE UP WORK POLICY WHEN SICK

K-12 students who are out sick have the number of days they are out to make-up missed homework and missed tests.

ABSENCES AND MAKING UP WORK:

1. Please be aware of the attendance policy
2. It shall be the responsibility of the parent and child to make up all missed work
3. If the child is having difficulty making up missed work or staying with the class, the parent should look into hiring an outside tutor
4. If the child is falling behind in a teacher-instructed ability-based group, the child is subject to re-placement

EXCESSIVE ABSENCE POLICY

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School's plan to address excessive absences includes communication with parents covering the reasons for the student missing school and, if necessary, notification of the local truant officer after the tenth consecutive day of absence. In the event that extraordinary circumstances require that the student be absent from school for three or more days, the teacher, the School Director, and the student's parent or legal guardian will develop a plan.

After five days of absence, parents will receive a letter/e-mail that details the school's procedure for addressing excessive absence and an official notification that five days of absence have been recorded. Five unknown absences will require a conference with parents to develop a plan of action.

After ten days of absence, parents will receive a phone call that will officially notify them that ten days of absence have been recorded.

After 15 or more absences – parents will receive a certified letter notifying them of the excessive absences. Students with 20 or more absences will be subject to automatic retention and will be required to meet with a representative of the leadership team. Extenuating circumstances may be recognized at the discretion of the School Director and upon Board approval.

Upon the receipt of the physician's written order of verifying that a student must remain at home or in a hospital for a period of not less than 14 school days in any school year, arrangements will be made the provision of educational services in the home or hospital. Students with chronic illnesses must provide evidence from a medical professional that specific days absent were due to medical reasons. A general notice acknowledging the illness is not sufficient.

SCHOOL CANCELTION POLICY – WEATHER RELATED

Unless there are truly extenuating circumstances, Mystic Valley only cancels an entire day of school if the Governor calls a state of emergency or tells all state employees that they are not to come to work. As conditions may vary greater in different locations, parents should exercise prudence in their decision to send their children. The school may, in certain weather conditions, delay the start of school, or hold an early release. In any of these scenarios, parents will be notified through the use of the SchoolReach notification system, school website, Facebook, and on WHDH channel 7 television.

RETENTION POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School does not practice simple social promotion of students from grade level to grade level. Promotions are based on the attainment of measured competencies as outlined in the specific curriculum criteria for each grade level. The gathering of data to determine the measured level of competency takes place on a weekly basis throughout the school year for each student. Frequent communication between parent, teacher and the professional development coordinator will take place in the event that a student has shown a significant lack of successful lesson progress.

The school considers a number of factors to determine if a child should be retained.

- A student failing to be at grade level in any area, as determined by the spring Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) tests (grades K-3)
- A student 1 or more years below grade level in any area on two consecutive ITBS tests (grades 4-9)
- A student falling into the warning category on one or more of the previous/current year's MCAS tests
- A teacher recommending a student being retained for academic reasons

While none of the above alone will require a student to be retained, any combination of two or more will require the School to retain the child. In all grades, a student having two or more failing/warning grades on their year-end report card will be retained.

Students meeting one of the criteria, or coming close to meeting one or more of the criteria, could be promoted to the next grade level on the condition that significant academic progress is made by the student to ensure promotion the following year. When this occurs, the parents will be notified in the fall, but no later than two weeks after the school receives the previous year's MCAS results from the state. At that point, a meeting will be convened between the School and the parents, and a list of goals will be established that will determine if that student will be promoted at the end of the school year.

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES FOR RETENTION

The decision to retain a student, although the school reserves the right to make the ultimate decision, must be made on the basis of clear communication between the home and school. Individual reported scores on both MCAS and the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills will constitute clear communication as outlined above. Communication must take place according to a time line. Both parties must attain a clear understanding of the student's progress over the course of the school year. Any academic modifications implemented must be clearly outlined. Results of modifications attempted must be communicated to parents. Under no circumstances should a decision to retain a student come as an unexpected solution to a parent. The timeline for communication between the above-mentioned parties is outlined below.

COMMUNICATION TIMELINE FOR RETENTION

January/February:

Initial meeting with the parent(s) and academic team is convened. Results of academic modifications attempted to this point are clearly explained to the parent(s) in attendance. Retention as a possible outcome is discussed. A plan for further modification strategies is determined.

June or July:

A final meeting with the parent(s) and the academic team is convened. Results of academic modifications attempted since January are discussed. Retention as a definite solution is discussed. A plan for an academic strategy that will be implemented at the beginning of the following school year is discussed if needed.

UNIFORM POLICY

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

In order to help create an environment conducive to learning, students at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School are required to wear simple uniforms. This policy is designed to permit students to focus their attentions on academics and on those aspects of their personalities that are truly important.

Uniforms must meet the requirements of the policy in terms of color and style. Students may not change out of uniform before 3:30 p.m. dismissal unless required for MVRCS away games. The school uniform consists of the following:

Uniform Pants

For K-8:

- Regular straight leg, ankle length **dark** khaki color dress pants must be worn.
- Corduroy, capris, denim, wide-leg, cargo, baggy, stripes, logos or designs of any kind are not allowed.
- Drawstrings are not allowed. Pants are to be worn at the waistline.
- Loose fitting or overly tight pants are not allowed.
- Shorts must be **dark** khaki in color and within two inches of the knee.
- Shorts are acceptable until October 1 and after May 1.

For 9-12:

- All of the above rules apply for grades 9-12 with the exception that the pants/shorts must be navy blue.

Uniform Shirt

For K-8:

- Short or long sleeve knit burgundy polo shirts with a collar. No other color or style is acceptable (i.e., no stripes, logos or designs of any kind.)
- Shirts must be worn tucked into pants.
- Turtlenecks are not allowed.
- Shirts must be of a thick enough quality to cover any undergarments that may be worn.
- Only white undershirts are allowed.
- Long sleeve white undershirts are prohibited when worn under a short sleeve shirt.

For 9-12:

- All of the above rules apply for grades 9-12 with the exception that the polo shirts must be white.

Sweaters/Fleece

For K-12:

- Solid burgundy cardigan, fleece pullover/jacket, sweaters and appropriate sweatshirts.
- No sweaters or sweatshirts of other colors are allowed.
- For safety reasons, no hoods are allowed.
- For grades 9-12, colors must be navy blue.

Skirts/Skorts/Jumpers

For K-8:

- Skirts, skorts and jumpers must be **dark** khaki in color and stay within the same guidelines as pants and shirts (i.e.: no denim, corduroy, cargo, baggy, stripes, drawstrings, logos or designs of any kind).
- All must be within two inches of the knee.

For 9-12:

- All of the above rules apply for grades 9-12 with the exception that the skirts/skorts/jumpers must be navy blue.

Shoes

- Black or brown (**not tan**) closed toe, closed heel casual or dress style shoe.
- No platforms, high heels or sandals of any kind are allowed.
- The only acceptable athletic shoe must meet the following criteria: all black including upper sole and laces, no stripes designs or logos.
- Shoes with a rise must be continual from toe to heel and no more than 2”.
- No boots of any sort are allowed
- During winter month’s boots can be worn to school but changed *immediately* into shoes or black athletic shoe.
- “Heelys” or similar sneakers/shoes that have wheels imbedded in them are not allowed.

Socks

- Socks must be worn at all times and may be any of the following solid colors: brown, black, burgundy or white. Grades 9-12, socks colors are blue, white or black.
- Socks must not have logos on them.

Stockings

- Burgundy, brown, white and/or black. At the High School, stockings colors are blue, white or black.
- Stockings must be plain, with no design, stripes, logos or holes.
- Thigh highs or leggings are not acceptable.

Belts

- Black, brown or burgundy belts are allowed.
- If pants worn contain a belt loop, a belt must be worn.
- Students are not allowed to cut off the belt loops.
- Belts must not dangle from the pants.
- Belts may not be decorative in nature (i.e. metal studs, metal rivets).

Jewelry & Accessories

- For safety reasons, the only jewelry permitted will be simple stud earrings in lobes only and no more than two studs per lobe.
- Necklaces, if worn, should not be visible.
- Watches are not allowed in grades K – 8, although they are allowed in grades 9-12.
- Only clear prescription contact lenses are allowed.
- Purses must be small in size (i.e. cannot carry books in them, no larger than an 8 X 11 piece of paper) and not be distracting or have writing on the exterior.

UNIFORM INFRACTIONS

To ensure that the School's uniform policy has its desired effect, it is important that it be implemented consistently. The School's administrative team will attempt to resolve all uniform infractions in an amicable manner with the parents but the policy will be enforced consistently for all children. School leaders, faculty, and staff will respond immediately to violations of the policy in the following manner:

Step One

Upon observation of a uniform infraction, a Uniform Compliance Form will be sent home to the parent. If the infraction is clothes related, the student will be required to change into an appropriate uniform from the school's uniform bank. If the infraction is due to jewelry or make-up, the student will remove the item(s) in violation. If the infraction is due to hair color/style and it is determined that hair color/style will cause a distraction in class, the student will remain in the office until a parent picks them up and corrects the infraction. For minor hair/color infractions a member of the administration team will contact the student's parents before the student returns to class. The parent will be asked to correct any infraction before the next day of school and return the signed Uniform Compliance Form. Parents who are unable to correct the infraction before their child returns to school must contact the Dean immediately. A deadline date for resolution of the problem will be set. If the dress code violation is not solved by the agreed upon date or the parents do not agree to respond to a date, step two of the enforcement plan will be instituted.

Step Two

If a student does not correct the dress code violation, or repeats an earlier addressed violation, then enforcement of the next step will begin. For grades K-8, the student will receive recess detention each day the infraction is not corrected for five days. After the fifth day, the student will receive after school detention of 60 minutes in addition to the recess detention. For students in grades 9 and above, where there is no recess, the student will receive 60 minutes of detention. K-12, the student will not be allowed to participate in any after school activities or other privileges until the situation is resolved. This includes sports, clubs and after hours

events like dances. Parents will be notified before the child receives after school detention. Transportation will not be provided to those children affected by the after school detention.

DRESS DOWN DAY

Most early dismissal days are considered “dress-down days” in grades K-8 but “spirit days” for grades 9-12. On these days children may attend school out of uniform for a suggested one-dollar donation. The donations are given to the homeroom teachers/grade level to support school incentives or donated to a charitable cause. Occasionally a student may lose their privilege of participating in a dress down day for behavioral reasons

All aspects of the uniform policy are in effect with the exception of clothes and shoes. Pants, skirts, dresses, shorts and skorts must be of appropriate length. Cotton sweatpants, pajama bottoms, tights, and yoga pants cannot be worn. Shirts must be appropriate length and not have any logos or writing on them that would be deemed inappropriate. Hoods are not allowed. Midsections must not be seen. Shirts must have sleeves. Children not in compliance must change into clothes from the school’s uniform bank. For grades 9-12, students can wear either school sports uniform tops or school colors. For all grades, students not in compliance will forfeit the privilege of participating in the next “dress-down day” or “spirit days”. If a student is non-compliant twice in a year, they will forfeit their privilege of participating in the “dress-down day” or “spirit day” for the rest of the year.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (GYM)

Students (K-8) remain in school uniforms during physical education classes. Students must wear soft-soled shoes to gym class. Students at the upper school (grades 9-12) remain in school uniform. The school reserves the right to provide alternative clothing if it is deemed what is being worn is inappropriate.

HAIR/ MAKE-UP

Students must keep their hair neat and out of their eyes. Students may not wear drastic or unnatural hair colors or styles or have a hairstyle that could be distracting to other students (extra long hair or hair more than 1 inch in thickness or height is not allowed). This means no coloring, dying, lightening (sun-in) or streaking of any sort. Hair extensions are not allowed. Hair elastics must be worn in the hair and not on the wrist. No make-up of any sort is allowed. Nail polish or artificial nails are not allowed. Tattoos are not allowed. Students are not allowed to write or draw on themselves. Bandanas or hats are not allowed during school hours. Facial hair is not allowed. Unshaven young men will receive a warning in the first instance and detentions thereafter.

COMPUTER USE AND POLICIES

ELECTRONIC MAIL

In addition to voice mail, administration and faculty may be contacted via e-mail. Refer to individual staff members or visit the school website www.mvracs.com for phone extensions and e-mail addresses.

INTERNET FIREWALL

MVRCS currently has a public Internet connection that is protected by a firewall system. The firewall protects our internal network from the Internet while permitting access to Internet services by staff members and/or student. Since Internet content is constantly changing, MVRCS had selected to use a Content Filter List that automatically updates itself on a weekly basis.

CONTENT FILTERING POLICY FOR UNDESIRABLE MATERIALS

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School will take all possible precautions to restrict access to undesirable

materials including, but not limited to, installing content filtering software/hardware solutions on its network or using an Internet provider which uses content filtering software on its equipment to screen all Internet web sites by URL and/or by keyword search. However, students and teachers must also accept responsibility for restricting access to these materials. Students who gain access to undesirable Internet materials must report this material to their teacher. Teachers who gain knowledge of undesirable Internet materials must report this material to an administrator.

SECURITY

Students and teachers must not allow others to use their network accounts (both Internet and School accounts). Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Designated school personnel may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on school file servers would always be private.

PARENTAL PERMISSION

Student and parent signatures on the Acceptable Use Internet policy will allow independent student use of the Internet. Their teachers will give instructions on Internet use to students.

E-MAIL

E-mail accounts will be assigned to teachers on a continuing basis. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks and other inappropriate behaviors are prohibited on the network. Receipt of inappropriate mail should immediately be reported to a teacher and to an administrator. The use of encryption will not be permitted. No right of privacy exists in favor of any employee of the firm in respect to this information.

SOCAL MEDIA

Use of such social media as Facebook and Twitter are not permitted during school hours.

SEXTING

Sexting is the act of electronically transmitting words or receiving and retaining nude, partially nude, lewd, sexually explicit, or graphic images of themselves or others or graphic or sexually explicit messages. Massachusetts Law prohibits sexting and includes, but is not limited to, consensual images shared between youth. Engaging in sexting may carry felony charges in the State of Massachusetts and label the youth as a sex offender. The school considers sending, sharing, possessing, or even viewing pictures, text messages, or e-mails that contain a sexual message or image a violation of this policy that will result in school discipline. Sexting will be handled as a matter of sexual harassment and will follow the disciplinary actions outlined in this handbook.

COPYRIGHT and CITATIONS

Any copyrighted materials are subject to the Fair Use provision of copyrighted materials as it relates to education. Internet materials used in reports or other documents must be cited. If there is no direct citation, the Uniform Resource Location (URL) must be cited.

DOWNLOADING

Downloading from the Internet without approval from a teacher or building principal is not allowed.

ELECTRONICS

Mobile Phones

Students are allowed to bring mobile phones to school for emergency purposes only. Any use of cell phones during school hours must be approved. Cellular phones must be off and stored in the locker during school hours. If they are seen or heard during school hours they will be confiscated. The device will be stored in the school's office and a parent will be contacted to retrieve it. The second offense will also incur a one-hour after-school detention. Subsequent offenses will be considered insubordination and will be handled according to Mystic Valley's disciplinary actions outlined in this handbook.

Any other electronic devices, other than those governed by Mystic Valley's Personal Electronic Devices policy, including headphones, are not permitted on school grounds. Headphones may only be used on buses traveling to or

from Mystic Valley athletic events. The consequences for the use of other electronic devices, if not governed by the Personal Electronic Devices policy, are the same as that of cellular phones.

Personal Electronic Devices (High School Only)

High school students may use Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs) in the library to complete tasks directly related to coursework. Students may not use PEDs for non-academic purposes, including (but not limited to) casual web browsing, purchasing items, accessing social media accounts, sending and receive messages (text or voice), taking photos or videos, listening to music, and consuming audiovisual media stored on the device or available on the web. Students may not use the cellular data capabilities of their PEDs. In addition, PED use must not be disruptive to other students, staff, or to the school environment at large. Students are expected to turn off and store all PEDs before departing from study hall or the library, as the use of PEDs in hallways is prohibited.

Mobile phones (including smartphones) and any devices primarily intended for gaming fall outside of the scope of this policy and, therefore, are prohibited for use in study halls and in the library.

If a student is found to be in violation of the PED policy, his or her device will be confiscated and returned only to a parent or guardian. The student will receive a consequence of no less than a one-hour after school detention. Subsequent offenses will be considered insubordination and will be handled according to Mystic Valley's disciplinary actions outlined in this handbook.

Students are solely responsible for PEDs during school hours. As such, the school is not responsible for theft, vandalism, or accidental damage to PEDs as a result of their use during the school day.

HOMEWORK POLICY

The primary mission of Mystic Valley Regional Charter School is to provide its students with a world-class education. This education includes a comprehensive homework policy for the students. The homework should be academic and purposeful for all students.

HOMEWORK (K-12)

Your child will be given homework assignments daily. Students can expect approximately 30 minutes of homework per night per subject starting as early as 7th grade.

Grades K-4: Homework may be sent home in a folder weekly with a signature page; please initial this page prior to sending it back to school with your child to verify that you have seen the homework.

Grades 5-6: If in the planner, please sign the planner weekly to verify you have seen the homework. Students should visit the school's website for access to PowerSchool, the student information system utilized by the school. After clicking on the link, students will be able to access their grade book, where they can transfer the assignments for the upcoming week into their planner. Students should accomplish this task on the Friday just ending, and then present their planner to their parent for signature. Parents should only sign the planner after confirming the upcoming week's assignments have been transferred to the planner in a neat and clear manner, and after discussing with their child any comments in the bottom of the planner for the week that just ended put there by the teacher. After doing both of those tasks, parents should sign at the bottom of the Monday column of the new week. Failure to have the planner completed or sign will result in the student receiving a detention.

Grades 7-12: Acceptance of personal responsibility, strong organizational skills, and independent work habits are three essential attributes of successful students that we seek to develop during seventh through twelfth grade. During these years the amount of homework assigned is greater than in the elementary grades, and the responsibility for recording, completing and returning assignments is placed squarely on the student's shoulders.

Each student will be issued a Student Planner, at no cost, which will be placed in the 3-ring organizational binder that students are expected to bring to each class every day. Failure to bring their planner to class will result in a warning. Planners should not be altered or folded in any way. If a student loses their planner, they will be required to purchase a new one from the school. Failure to do homework will result in an

A-Plan warning.

Students will have homework every day, but will have access to the homework assignments for the following week on the preceding Friday via PowerSchool, which can be accessed via the school's website. If the school's website is not up to date, the teacher will be required to provide a written outline of all assignments due for the following week on the preceding Friday.

Over the weekend, parents should examine the planner, or visit the website, to see what assignments are due and when. Parents must review and sign at the bottom of the Monday column the planner of the new week and return each Monday when homeroom teachers conduct planner checks. For long-term work such as projects and reports, students are expected to write in the due dates for the intermediate stages and the final copy as soon as the assignment is announced.

Students who do not bring their planner to class and/or homeroom will receive an A-Plan warning. Students who fail to present their homeroom teacher with a signed planner on Monday morning will receive a one-hour after school detention.

The following are some suggestions to assist you and your child gain the most from his or her homework experience.

- Make homework rules together with your child. Decide when it will be done, where it will be done, and what will happen if it is not completed.
- Provide a quiet place for your child to do homework, such as a desk in his or her room or the kitchen table. Make sure there is sufficient light and that distractions are limited.
- Show an interest in your child's homework and ask him or her about it each night.
- Give your child a healthy snack before he or she begins homework. This should help with concentration.
- Give your child a short break from his or her work if needed.
- Encourage your child to work independently. Assist him or her if needed.
- Give you child positive words of encouragement, such as, "I'm proud of you," or "I knew you could do this all by yourself!"

Please feel free to contact your child's classroom teacher if you have any questions about homework.

KINDERGARTEN THROUGH SECOND GRADE

The kindergarten through second grade students will receive homework assignments on Friday and the completed work is due the following Thursday. Each week the student will receive weekly binder homework in addition to nightly math homework. Each student is expected to bring his/her homework binder to school every day to encourage responsibility and organizational planning. There is a consequence if they do not bring their binder to school.

The teachers will sign the assignment sheet before sending it home with the student and a parent signature is required upon return. Teachers will provide the homework in multiple facets either on the assignment page/packet, website, and/or posted in the classroom.

It is the student's responsibility to complete the work and return it when due. A parent/guardian is required to sign the assignment page weekly for Thursday morning to be checked by the homeroom teacher. Students will receive a homework infraction if the homework assignment page is not signed.

There will be one project assigned quarterly and assignment for completion will be determined by grade level.

CONSEQUENCES FOR HOMEWORK INFRACTIONS IN GRADES K-2

All Homework infractions will be noted in the teachers' grade book.

First Quarterly Offense: A notation on the monthly calendar in the daily blue folder will be noted to the

parent/guardian stating the homework infraction. The completed homework must be returned the following day.

Second and subsequent Quarterly Offenses: A notation on the monthly calendar in the daily blue folder will be noted to the parent/guardian stating the homework infraction. The completed homework assignment must be returned the following day.

When homework is repeatedly incomplete there will be recess detention and a meeting with the teacher. The student will complete the homework in school the following day. The teacher will determine the time of completion. Times can include, but are not limited to: recess, gym, music, art, library, homeroom and lunch.

THIRD THROUGH SIXTH GRADE

The third through sixth grade students will receive homework assignments on Friday and the completed work is due the following Thursday. Each week the student will receive weekly binder homework in addition to daily homework.

Each student is expected to bring his/her homework binder/planner to school every day to encourage responsibility and organizational planning. There is a consequence if they do not bring their binder/planner to school.

Teachers will provide the homework in multiple facets either on the assignment page/packet, website, and/or posted in the classroom. It is the student's responsibility to complete the work and return it when due. A parent/guardian is required to sign the assignment page/planner weekly for Friday (K-4) Monday (5th – 8th) morning to be checked by the homeroom teacher. Students will receive a homework infraction if the homework assignment page /planner is not signed.

Throughout the year students are required to complete a content area project or book report that is an extension of their in class unit. The project will be assigned the first week of the month and is due the last week of the month.

CONSEQUENCES FOR HOMEWORK INFRACTIONS IN GRADES 3-6

All Homework infractions will be noted in the teachers' grade book.

First Quarterly Offense: A notation will be marked on the monthly calendar in the student's homework binder/blue folder or planner to the parent/guardian stating the homework infraction. The completed homework must be returned the following day.

Second Quarterly Offense: A notation will be marked on the monthly calendar in the student's homework binder/blue folder or planner to the parent/guardian stating the homework infraction. The completed homework must be returned the following day.

Third Quarterly Offense: A notation will be marked on the monthly calendar in the student's homework binder/blue folder or planner to the parent/guardian stating the homework infraction. A card change will be given to the student. The completed homework must be returned the following day. . If the assignment is not returned the following day, it will be marked as a zero. This will be the last warning.

Fourth and Subsequent Quarterly Offenses: The student will be assigned after school detention for every subsequent infraction. The teacher will be listing the after school detention earned as a result of the infraction on the monthly calendar (grade 3), weekly homework sheet (grade 4) or in the student planner (grades 5 & 6) showing the date the detention is to be served.

If a parent has a conflict with the date, they need to contact the Dean of Students at (teighmey@mvracs.org 781-388-0222 ext. 3026) to reschedule. **Parents should not contact teachers about rescheduling detentions.**

Any assignments not completed during class time will be graded and the unfinished work will be sent home to complete as homework. If your child is unable to complete the work as homework, a homework infraction will be assigned.

STUDY HALL POLICY (9-12)

Study halls must be silent. Students must come prepared for study halls and detention, as they will not be permitted to go to their lockers. They must have a reading book at all times and are not permitted to put their heads on desks. Only one student may leave the classroom at a time. Students may not be out of the room for longer than 5 minutes unless the nurse/office calls back for the student. Students may not leave the classroom to obtain a pass from another teacher, and must do so before school or during transition time.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

The Golden Rule of academic honesty is simple: always do your own work. When you use someone else's work, you must give them credit for it. Never claim credit for someone else's work. If credit for an idea, illustration or specific language is not given, the teacher assumes that the work is your own. Using the words or work of another without giving credit is **plagiarism**.

GIVING CREDIT

Sources must be credited in two ways: in the bibliography (which lists all the sources consulted during the preparation of the assignment), and in footnotes or endnotes (which identify the precise source of each idea, illustration or passage which is duplicated, quoted or paraphrased). It is not enough simply to list a source in the bibliography if material from that source appears in the assignment.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

Book reports, lab reports, research papers, and special projects require advance planning, sound time management, a great deal of preparation, and several drafts. For this reason, such major assignments often represent a significant proportion of a student's grade. On all such assignments students are expected to express only your own ideas unless credit is otherwise given. The school routinely uses "Turnitin.com" as one tool to check for plagiarism.

DAILY HOMEWORK

Unless the teacher specifically says otherwise, students must do their own homework. Doing your own homework gives you the benefit of the assignment. You learn nothing by simply copying someone else's work, and it is dishonest to claim that someone else's work is your own. Copying someone else's assignment is **plagiarism**. Giving another student your homework to copy is also academically dishonest, and is subject to the same consequences.

EXAMINATIONS, TESTS AND QUIZZES

Cheating on an exam, test or quiz is a form of plagiarism, because the cheater is falsely claiming credit for mastery of the material. Helping another student cheat is also dishonest. The same consequences apply.

COMPUTER USE

The Internet is a wonderful source of information, but only when used honestly. Material taken from an online source must be cited, or that use is plagiarism.

Downloading an assignment or purchasing an assignment (which includes paying someone else to complete an assignment) is very serious violations of the Mystic Valley Code of Values. The most blatant forms of plagiarism could result in the student **receiving a zero for the quarter in that course** as well as appropriate disciplinary action.

FONT SIZE, MARGINS, AND SPACING

Unless the teacher specifies otherwise, all assignments are to be in 12-point type in a standard font such as Times New Roman or Arial, regular style, with 1" margins, and double-spaced. Manipulating these dimensions to make a paper seem longer than it is will result in a lower grade.

THESAURUS

Simply changing words by using the thesaurus function on your computer does not make the text yours. The passage that was superficially altered through the thesaurus must be cited.

CONSEQUENCES

School administrators and the student's parents will be notified of each instance of plagiarism, and copies of each notification will be kept in the student's academic file. All offenders in K-12 will be required to **re-do** the plagiarized assignment honestly. In grades K-8, the Administration will determine the appropriate consequence. For grades 9-12, they will receive only **one-half of the credit** the assignment would otherwise have received and will be required to serve a one-hour after-school detention. The student may have up to five days to do this if the assignment is a major essay or project; otherwise, the student must hand in the assignment the next day. Second and subsequent offenses will result in **zero credit on the assignment** and two hours of after-school detention. Third and subsequent offenses will result in **zero credit for the quarter** in that course and a one-day in-school suspension.

For High School students, third offenses in the same year will also result in a **notation on the student's transcript**. Offenses are cumulative across the curriculum in each academic year. Thus a ninth grade student who plagiarizes in Math, then English, then History, would be required to re-do the assignment for half-credit in math, would receive a zero on the English assignment, and would receive a zero for the quarter in history. Students who plagiarize may also be subject to disciplinary as well as academic consequences, which will become increasingly serious with each incident. **Detention, suspension, and retention are among the possible disciplinary outcomes when a student plagiarizes.**

SECTION TWO –FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q – Can my family help me complete the assignment?

A – Yes, but there are important limits. The work you turn in needs to be yours, not a parent's. Again, the important thing is that you give credit to anyone whose idea or work you use.

Q – Can My Friends And I Work Together?

A – Yes, up to a point. You can help each other, but you cannot simply copy from each other. If you have questions about what the difference is, ask your teacher for clarification.

Q – Is It Plagiarism If I Use An Online Literature Study Guide?

A – Not if you read the book, and use your own ideas in writing the report. If you get an idea from an online study guide, you must cite it properly. Otherwise, it is plagiarism. **When in Doubt, Cite Your Source.**

Q – Can I Use The Same Paper Or Project For More Than One Class?

A – Almost never, although your teachers may agree in advance to allow you to do this. Usually you may use an assignment only once, for one class. Using a paper a second time without permission is self-plagiarism – claiming credit for work that is not original for that second class.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY

In compliance with Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulations (603 CMR 46.00), the MVRCS ensures that every student attending our school is free from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

1. To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm; and
2. To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

Use of restraint – Physical restraint may be used only in the following circumstances:

- When non-physical interventions would not be effective; and

- When the students behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others

Limitations on use of restraint – Physical restraint in a public education program shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

Physical restraint is prohibited in the following circumstances:

- As a means of punishment; or
- As a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm.

For more information about this policy, please don't hesitate to contact the school office.

WELLNESS POLICY

For more information, please go to our website at www.mvrCS.com

SECTION 3: PROGRESS REPORTS & REPORT CARDS

Progress reports will be sent to parents 4 times each year to provide specific descriptive information about student progress in each subject. At the end of each semester, parents will receive a report card with cumulative data on their children's performance and progress.

The following is a description of the K-6 report card:

READING	Definitions
Recognizes Sounds	Assessment of Sounds RM 1 and RM 2.
Reads Fluently and Accurately	Average score of Oral Story Check-Outs. RM 1-6.
Comprehends What is Read	Mastery Tests for RM 1-6.; Novels tests and quizzes.
Completes Workbook Accurately	Average score of Workbook Grades/Comprehension Work.
SPELLING	
Spelling Lessons/Applied Spelling	Average score of Spelling Tests & Applied spelling in daily writing assignments.
WRITING	
Language for Learning/Reasoning & Writing	Average score of workbooks/tests scores in program Gr. K-6.
Applies/Correct Use of Grammar and Punctuation	Assessment of grammar worksheets and application of grammar to writing assignments across curricula. Grades K-6.
Forms Letters Correctly	Assessment of cursive program lessons and/or daily writing assignments for quality printing/cursive. Grades K-6.
Ability to Express Ideas in Paragraph Form.	Assessment of content for paragraph/writing assignments. Gr. 1-6.
MATHEMATICS	
Accuracy of Homework	Homework average of guided practice/problem set.
Completes Math Facts and Problems Accurately	Average score of math fact sheets and meeting/mental math.
Accuracy of Tests	Average score of tests (oral and written).
HISTORY	
Understands and Applies Historical & Geographical Concepts	Average score of tests, daily work, and projects. Gr. K-6.
SCIENCE	
Understands and Applies Science Concepts	Average score of tests, daily work, and projects. Gr. K-6.
SPECIALTY CLASSES	Grades K-4: Grades 5-8: Graded.
ART	Average based on participation, behavior, and care of materials.
MUSIC	Average based on participation, assessments, and behavior.
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	Average based on participation, effort, and cooperation.
LIBRARY	Average based on participation, assessments, and behavior. Gr. K-6
SPANISH	Average based on participation, class work/homework, and assessments.

BIWEEKLY ACADEMIC WARNING NOTICE

In grades 7-12, if a student is averaging below an 80% in between progress reports and report cards, they will receive a Biweekly Academic Warning notice in the mail/email. This notice will describe the reason for the grade, current averages and opportunities for improvement. In addition, the teacher and subject will be listed for each area that is below an 80%. This additional communication for these grade levels is to assist parents with their connection between home and school. If a child scores below an 80% on any given test the test will be sent home for parent signature.

SECTION 4: PARENT INVOLVEMENT

VOLUNTEERING

Parents are encouraged to participate in school-related activities. Volunteers may also be involved in monitoring the playground and assisting with School events. In addition, parents are encouraged to contribute their time and talent to organizing extracurricular activities and community outreach projects. All School volunteers must complete a CORI (Criminal Offender) check, which must be done annually. If an activity occurs that is not in keeping with the School policies, the School Director may discontinue your services.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The Mystic Valley Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is an independent 503[c3] non-profit organization for the purpose of enhancing the educational experience of the students at MVRCS. It is run by a group of parents dedicated to supporting student learning and the overall success of the School.

MYSTIC VALLEY BOOSTER CLUB

The Mystic Valley Booster Club is an independent organization composed of school officials and parents dedicated to supporting the development of athletics and after-school activities for the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School.

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

The Parent Advisory Committee is an organization for parents of children with disabilities and other interested parties. This group works towards providing respect for, understanding, awareness, and a network of support for students with special needs and their families. The PAC will meet with school administration in order to plan, develop and evaluate Mystic Valley's special education and other programs that can improve the school.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year to facilitate open communication between parents and teachers regarding students' progress. Refer to the School calendar for specific dates.

We maintain an open door policy at the School. Parents are encouraged to visit their children's classrooms. Parents are required to sign in, give a 24-hour notice for observations and be accompanied while in the building. Arrangements should be made directly with the classroom teacher. Informal conferences or conversations may also be scheduled with teachers or School leaders at any time throughout the year.

PARENT INFORMATIONAL LETTERS

Periodic letters from the School Director on issues of educational interest will be posted on the school's website and e-mailed to parents. Intended to supplement the regular news items available on the school's website, these letters will provide broader perspectives on the life and mission of the school.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips may be planned throughout the year for various academic, enrichment and extracurricular purposes. Parents will receive advance notice of all such trips. A permission slip must be signed by a student's parent in order for the student to participate in a field trip. Students without signed permission slips will remain at the School in another class. Participating students should bring a bag lunch unless otherwise noted. Although the School absorbs most of the cost of the field trips, parents are sometimes asked to contribute. Occasionally a student may lose their privilege of participating in a field trip for behavioral reasons. If this was to happen, and the money has already been sent to the third party, the parent will not be reimbursed.

Occasionally, parents may be needed to serve as chaperones on class field trips. No parent should feel obligated to serve in this capacity, but parents are encouraged to volunteer if possible. The primary responsibility of a chaperone is to ensure appropriate supervision for students. Parental chaperones are asked to take this responsibility seriously and to remain vigilant and attentive to the students' needs throughout the trip. All chaperones are required to attend a chaperone meeting every 3 years. Children who are not enrolled in the class may not accompany the chaperones. If there are more volunteers than needed for room parents, a lottery will be done by the lead teacher of the grade to determine which parents may go on the field trip.

SECTION 5: CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/ATHLETICS

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School strives to offer many different and challenging programs to our students. All students must meet certain academics and behavioral standards before they are allowed to participate. (See below). This applies to any after school activity including but not limited to: athletics, drama, band, etc. Students will not be eligible for any school activity if they owe money to the school for any reason, i.e. failure to pay user fee or failure to pay for the replacement of school property. These parents should contact the Business Manager to make payment schedules or to dispute the School's position. The School's Finance Committee on a monthly basis will hear all financial disputes. In the event of a dispute, the student will be allowed to participate until the Finance Committee makes a decision. Parents are responsible for providing a recent (within 13 months) physical of each child before they will be allowed to participate in any athletic activity.

STUDENT CLUBS

All student clubs must be associated with the School's original charter and/or with an academic discipline offered at the School, have a School paid faculty advisor present at all club activities, and go through an approval process the school year before the proposed first meeting. The School reserves the right to limit the number of officially sanctioned clubs in any given year. Clubs must maintain a minimum of 15 paid members with an average attendance rate of 80% (attendance taken at all meetings). Meeting times and location will be determined in the approval process. Club viability will be assessed on an annual basis.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY STANDARD AT CLOSE OF MARKING PERIOD

Any student receiving a failing mark in a subject for any of the first three marking periods will be prohibited from participating in extra-curricular activities for the following marking period (quarter). If athletic or activity seasons extend beyond the marking period and a student improves academically to meet the eligibility guidelines, they will be deemed eligible to participate in the activities, granted they would have met any qualifying criteria established by the coach, instructor or school. If the activity in question has a user fee, the parents of said student would be required to pay a pro-rated amount of the user fee.

If a student fails a course for the year they will be ineligible for fall sports or activities unless an approved course is passed in a recognized summer school. Students that are dismissed from the team because of being deemed ineligible will not qualify for a refund of any user fee paid to the school.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY STANDARD DURING MARKING PERIOD

All members of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School competitive sports/co-curricular teams must maintain consistent academic progress in all subject areas. Consistent effort and forward progress must be evident in the following areas:

- **Homework**
- **Class Work**
- **Time on Task**
- **Special Projects**
- **Test Preparation and Results**

Failure to meet the above standards, as determined by the teacher and administration, will result in a short-term suspension and /or dismissal from the team or squad. Students that are dismissed from the team because of being deemed ineligible will not qualify for a refund of any user fee paid to the school.

STUDENT CONDUCT ELIGIBILITY STANDARD

All students participating in extracurricular activities, as defined above, must maintain an excellent student conduct standing. Compliance with the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School Code of Virtues will be especially monitored in the following areas:

- **Following Directions the First Time Given**
- **Transition in Hallways to Specialty Classes and Recess**
- **Conduct During Instruction**
- **Conduct in Specialty Classes, Recess Periods & Lunch Periods**
- **Respect for Adults**
- **Respect for Peers**

Failure to comply in any of the areas above may result in an in-school or out-of-school suspension. Suspension from the regular classroom setting will result in suspension from participation in games and practices, meetings that coincide with the duration of the suspension, but no less than 1 game for athletes. Serious behavioral infractions may result in dismissal from the team, squad, or organization.

ATTENDANCE

Any student absent from school the day of a scheduled activity will not be allowed to participate in a scheduled activity for that day. A student must be in attendance at school prior to 11:00 a.m. Students dismissed before 11:00 a.m. would not be considered in attendance that day and will therefore be prohibited from participating from a scheduled activity that day. Students must be present on Friday (or last school day) before a weekend/vacation activity, or they are prohibited from participating from a scheduled activity during that weekend/vacation. Suspended students are ineligible to attend or participate in school activities while they are suspended. The school's Director must approve any exception to this policy in advance.

USER FEES AND SUSPENSION

User fees are non-refundable in the event that a student is declared ineligible due to an academic or behavioral suspension or in the event the student quits or is dismissed from the team.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

The school provides equal opportunity for all students to participate in intramural and interscholastic sports, extracurricular activities or clubs sponsored by the school and does not exclude students on the basis of race, sex, gender identity, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness.

SECTION 6: ADMISSION, RE-ENROLLMENT & TRANSFERS

ADMISSION

All students in the Commonwealth are eligible for enrollment at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School. Preference for admission into the school is given in the following order:

- Siblings of current or admitted students
- Regional Applicants-applicants from communities specifically named in the charter: Malden, Medford, Melrose, Everett, Stoneham and Wakefield
- Non-Regional Applicants-applicants from all other communities

No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. Students who are entering kindergarten must be five years of age before September 1 of the school year for which they are applying. For more information, please view the school's enrollment policy which can be found at www.mvrcs.com.

RE-ENROLLMENT

To secure your child's place at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School for the next school year, you must officially re-enroll him or her. In early spring, re-enrollment packets will be sent home along with the spring deadline for initial re-enrollment. Students whose re-enrollment packets are received after the deadline will have to re-apply for the following lottery. All students must participate in a final re-enrollment for the subsequent school year in July. Those not participating in either the initial or final re-enrollment will forfeit their spot at the school.

SIBLING PREFERENCE

Siblings of current students who are not enrolled at Mystic Valley will be granted sibling preference, and will be offered enrollment in the school when there is a vacancy in the respective grade. If a family fails to transfer the non-enrolled sibling when offered an opening, that sibling will forfeit their sibling preference and will be subject to the enrollment policy of the school. **If a student leaves the school, but has one or more siblings remain at the school, they forfeit their claim to sibling preference and would be subject to the enrollment policy of the school.**

TRANSFERS

Parents who need to withdraw their child are asked to call the Registrar at 781-388-0222 ext. 2014 to schedule an exit interview, receive a transfer slip and return school property such as books. The school's office will attempt to meet all requests but parents should give a 24-hour notice to allow for the preparation of needed materials. Once the parent receives a transfer slip, their child is no longer a student at MVRCS and must accompany the parent home.

STUDENT RECORDS

Every student is required to complete and submit the following forms as part of the registration process. Forms are available in a family's primary language. Mystic Valley protects the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information we collect, use or maintain according to state and federal requirements. Any parent can view or have copies made of their child's records with a 24-hour written notice. The school reserves the right to charge parents for copies made of records at ten cents per copy. For assistance in completing these forms call the Registrar at 781-388-0222 ext. 2014.

Proof of the Child's Age. Child must be 5 years old prior to September 1 of the current school year to be eligible for Kindergarten.

Registration Form. This form is used to record all basic information about the student and the family, including home, work, and emergency telephone numbers. It is extremely important that a parent or guardian sign this form. All sections must be completed.

Free and Reduced Price Meals Application. This form allows families to apply for federally funded meals, and it must be completed for all students. Student name, address, signature, and monthly income or federal assistance

number must be included; all such information must reflect the student's status no more than 30 days prior to the first day of school. These applications will be distributed by the end of the first week of school and must be returned within 10 days. All family members must be listed on the same form.

Transportation Application. This form allows families to apply for and receive transportation from the School. The form must be completed for each student enrolled wishing to request transportation. The home address and telephone number should be indicated on this form, in addition to the nearest major cross street in the student's neighborhood. Notification of the student's assigned bus stop will be sent via regular mail. Students are not allowed to ride the bus without a signed transportation contract. To be eligible for transportation, a child must live more than 1 and ½ linear miles from the school building they attend and within the region (Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Stoneham and Wakefield). The school will revoke the privilege of transportation for those students that do not abide by the contract.

Medical Forms. This set of forms, which must be submitted for all students within the first 30 days of attendance, includes immunization schedules; family medical information; the child's medical history, including allergies; and a Medication Permission Form, which will permit the school to dispense specified medication to the student, as necessary. More information is provided in the Health and Safety section.

Record Release. This form gives the School permission to obtain all records pertaining to a given student from his or her previous school. This form must be completed and should include the telephone number and address of the previous school, as well as the signature of the parent or legal guardian.

It is critical that the School is notified immediately of any changes in a student's name, address, phone number, responsible parent, or any other information provided at the time of registration. Such changes should be communicated in writing and addressed to the School's Business Manager.

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School complies with all Federal and State laws concerning student records. Information regarding a student's progress will be shared only with parents or guardians, appropriate members of the School's faculty and staff, and any professional consultants retained for the purpose of measuring an/or improving instructional quality. When information regarding student performance is made public, it will be presented in such a way as to avoid the identification of specific individual students.

The School may not provide name, phone, or address lists to parents wishing to organize with other parents/guardians of students at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School. Parents must find alternative ways to acquire such information, such as circulating forms at parent events or meetings of the Parent Teacher Organization.

Photographs, Video Recording and Press Releases

People and groups interested in our programs may visit the school. If for any reason, you do not wish to have your child photographed, videotaped, or otherwise contacted by the media, you must notify the school office in writing

SECTION 7: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

MEAL PROGRAM K-12

All meals require a ticket:

Tickets can be purchased at the lower school and high school main buildings. Please visit each office for their operating hours.

Please remember tickets will not be sold or given to children of any grade. It is the parent's responsibility to make arrangements with the school for tickets in the event they cannot come to school during the hours listed above. If a parent is having difficulty obtaining tickets, please contact the business manager to work out alternative arrangements.

The cost for tickets (school year 14-15) will be as follows:

Milk	\$.35
Breakfast	\$1.75
Lunch	\$3.25

Parents are encouraged to buy tickets in bulk (maximum 2 sheets per child) to avoid running out of tickets unexpectedly. If a child is sent to school without a lunch ticket a box of cereal will be provided and a note will be sent home with the child.

After the fifth time a child is sent to school without a lunch, the parents will be contacted.

Families that qualify for **free or reduced meals** must also acquire tickets from the office. The tickets used by those families qualifying for free or reduced meals will not reflect the status of any child. Families that qualify for free or reduced meals cannot exchange or share tickets with other families. If this practice is discovered, the family will be warned. If it happens again, the family will be removed from the program and forfeit their eligibility.

Families may complete a free or reduced form at any time during the school year if they experience a change in their income. If the form dictates a change in the student's meal status, the new status will take effect from the date of the new application forward, not retroactive to the beginning of the school year.

Those electing to participate in the school's breakfast program or bring homemade breakfast from home must eat between the hours of 7:40 a.m. to 7:55 a.m.

MEALS SENT FROM HOME

In the event that you discover your child forgot his or her food from home, please do not bring fast food items to school. Please quickly make a homemade lunch/snack for your child clearly marked with his or her name. If food made from an outside establishment is sent into the school, the school will provide the student with an alternative lunch/snack and give the food from the outside establishment to the child upon dismissal.

SECTION 8: HEALTH & SAFETY

SCHOOL AND PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The student's parent/guardian is primarily responsible for the health of the child. Parents should not send children to school if they are showing signs of illness.

The school is responsible for the student's well-being during school hours. The school, through its nurse's office, will handle any illness, injuries or emergencies that arise throughout the day. The parents will be responsible for any follow up medication or treatment and should keep the school's nurse informed of all developments.

Parents are responsible for providing a recent (within 13 months) physical of each child before they will be allowed to participate in any athletic activity.

The following health screenings are performed on students as mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

- Vision and Hearing
- Heights and Weights
- Postural screening

Children found to be at risk will be re-tested and the nurse will notify the parents.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Unless legally exempted, students must meet the following immunization requirements as mandated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Entering Kindergarten:

- 5 doses of DPT (Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus)
- 4 doses of Polio
- 2 doses of Measles, 1 dose of Mumps and 1 dose Rubella (MMR)
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 2 dose of Varicella or documentation of Chicken Pox
- Test and Results of Tuberculosis (TB) or note from a doctor for exemption (low risk)—(see note below)
- Results of a Physical Examination – no more than 6 months old
- Results of the most recent Lead Screening showing a numerical value

Entering Grade 4:

- Results of a Physical Examination – no more than 12 months old

Entering Grade 7:

- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 2 doses of Measles, 1 dose of Mumps and 1 dose of Rubella (MMR)
- 1 dose of a Tetanus booster if no documentation of booster within 5 years
- 1 dose of Varicella if younger than 13 years old
- 2 doses of Varicella if 13 years old or older
- Results of Physical Examination – no more than 12 months old

Tuberculosis (TB) is a growing concern regarding health. According to the Director of the Division of Tuberculosis Prevention and Control as part of the Massachusetts Department of Health, Bureau of Communicable Diseases, a student is to be assessed for risk. If a student is at low risk no TB test is required. If a student is at high risk, per the department's standards above, they need to be tested for TB. Any new student that is new to the country would be considered at risk. In this event the student could not enter the school until the test is performed and the child needs to be cleared of TB by a doctor.

Exemptions: The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School will honor the request made by parents when it comes

to exempting them from Massachusetts Immunization Regulations due to religious beliefs with the understanding that:

- Parents request the exemption in writing to the school's nurse and administration prior to the first day of each school year,
- Parents requesting the exemption sign an acknowledgement that their child will be excluded from attending school in the event of an incident of a communicable disease at the school for the duration established by the state in the Massachusetts Department of Public Health "Immunization Exemptions and Vaccine Preventable Disease Exclusion Guidelines in School Settings."

INJURIES OR ILLNESS

In the event of a major injury or onset of a serious illness the school will immediately contact 911 and then the parent. If necessary the school will transport the child to the Melrose Wakefield Hospital for emergency treatment. If the decision to contact 911 is made the cost of any subsequent treatment shall fall to the parents.

If the injury/illness is less severe and does not require immediate hospitalization, the school will contact the parent for directives. In the event the parent cannot be reached, the school will contact the individuals listed on the student's emergency list. If after exhausting the list and no one is reached, the school will have the student transported to the closest hospital (Melrose Wakefield) for care.

Parents should not send their child to school if they show signs of illness. Children should not attend or return to school until they have had a normal temperature (with no medication) for at least 24 hours. If a child becomes ill the parent, or its designee, will be notified to come pick up the child. In the event that no one can be contacted, and the illness does not require hospitalization, the child will remain with the nurse until such time as the parent can be contacted.

MEDICATIONS

Students may require medications to return to school after illness or for other reasons. The following parameters have been established concerning medications:

Prescription medications:

The school must have on file a signed parent acknowledgement form.

The medicine must be in a labeled prescription bottle from a pharmacy including student's name, name of medication and directions for administration (dose and time).

Prescription bottles must not contain anything more than a 30-day supply.

Prescription medicine must be delivered to the nurse **by the parent**, not by the student.

Epipens:

The school must have a signed acknowledgement form and an emergency form.

The school must have documentation from a physician including the allergy and side effects.

The epipen must be given to the school in the original box from the pharmacy. It must have on the original label with the child's name.

Inhalers:

The school must have a signed acknowledgement form and an emergency form.

The school must have documentation from a physician including the diagnosis. All inhalers must be labeled with the child's name.

Parents should send an extra inhaler into the nurse's office.

Over the counter medication:

1. The school must have a signed acknowledgement form.

They need to be sent in their original container labeled with the child's name and teacher's name. Parents need to notify the nurse in writing of dosage and time to distribute.

Nebulizer Treatments:

The school must have a signed acknowledgement form.

The school must have documentation from a physician including the diagnosis and frequency of treatment.

Any associated medications or tubing should be labeled and given to the nurse.

ACCOMODATIONS MADE TO INJURIES/ILLNESS

From time to time children's injuries will result in their needing crutches; wheelchairs or accommodations to be made that will allow them to participate in school. A doctor's note should be sent to the nurse's office after any medical treatment that might affect the child's ability to participate in any activities at school. The Nurse will contact the 504 Coordinator to develop a 504 Accommodation Plan to address the student's needs during the period of. If necessary, the child will be allowed to use the elevator. If a child cannot participate in Physical Education the nurse must receive a doctor's note and a note should also be given to the child's teacher.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

A communicable disease is one that can be transmitted from one child to another. Some of these are listed below. If your child appears to have any of the symptoms (sore throat, red eyes, blotchy skin or unusual rashes, etc.) they must be kept out of school and seen by the doctor.

Some of the more common communicable diseases are:

Headlice – All lice must be removed before return. Nurse must clear child before being able to return. (The nurse should be consulted to assist in eliminating the head lice.)

Chicken Pox – Student should stay out of school for one week after onset. They must have a doctor's note verifying their ability to return.

Strep Throat, Conjunctivitis and Scarlet Fever– Student should return to school 24 hours after medication is started accompanied by a doctor's note.

FIELDTRIPS AND MEDICATION

If a child receives medication (including an EpiPen), a permission form is needed authorizing a specific individual (teacher for example) to administer in order for the child to participate in the field trip.

Communication with Parents

The school nurse or staff member will administer first aid or medical treatment in the event of minor injuries. First aid treatments are procedures that require only the application of simple procedures. Some examples are ice packs, bandages antibacterial ointments. Medical treatments are more advanced procedures that require more extensive treatment. Some examples are the application of pressure to halt bleeding and the care of more serious cuts and bruises. In the event of a student receiving first aid, a note will be sent home with the student informing the parent of the incident. The communication with the parent will be based on the student's diligence in insuring that his/her parent receives the note. In the event of a student receiving a medical treatment for an injury, the parent will be notified through a telephone call.

PHYSICALS

All physicals will be collected and filed by the School Nurses for each building. This is true for academic as well as athletic purposes.

SECTION 9: PICK UP/DROP-OFF/BUS INFORMATION

VISITOR IDENTIFICATION

To help ensure a safe and secure learning environment for your children, all visitors to the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School are required to sign-in at the appropriate school's office, show identification and wear a visitor's pass. Faculty and staff have been instructed to escort anyone not having a pass immediately to the office for identification.

PICK UP AND DROP OFF

PROCEDURE #1 GRADES 1-8

Parents find parking in the surrounding areas and escort their children to the lines that form at all buildings from 7:20-7:30a.m. Students enter either building at approximately 7:30a.m. Parents should pick up your children for all grades in similar lines as the morning. No pick-up is allowed after 3:00 p.m.

PROCEDURE #2 FOR DROP- OFF ONLY GRADES K, 1, 3, 4, 5 AND 6

Parents may also choose to drop off in front of the school lobby (fishbowl) that is located on the Jacob street side of the school property. This procedure allows for parents to drive into the rear parking lot for drop-off only –**no parking**. This lot is designated as one way. Please enter on Jacob Street and exit on Salem Street. As is our practice, staff members will be assigned to supervise the children on the sidewalk in front of the school lobby from 7:20a.m.-7:40a.m. Students will line up in front of the fishbowl until they enter the building, at approximately 7:30a.m. For the first week of school, staff members will be assigned to specifically help younger students with any difficulty they may have in finding their classrooms.

PROCEDURE #3 for DROP- OFF ONLY Grades 2, 7 and 8

Parents may choose to drop off for the Annex Building on the side of Laurel Street where the building is located. Parents should pull up to the curb and let their children out of the passenger's side (side closest to building) of the car. Parents are not allowed to park along the school side of Laurel Street, or get out of their car for any reason during morning drop off.

PROCEDURE #4 DROP-OFF/PICK UP FOR KINDERGARTEN

Morning Procedures:

Bus students will continue to go to 770 Salem Street and will line up in the church parking lot. If there is inclement weather, the children will gather inside 770 Salem Street. A shuttle bus will then transport all Kindergarten bus students from 770 Salem Street to Eastern Avenue. A staff member will travel with the children on the bus between the two campuses.

Morning drop off will follow procedures similar to those followed at the 770 Salem Street location. Cars will enter the new facility from either the Eastern Avenue or the Cross Street entrance. A staff member will be there to greet cars and open doors so that your child can get out and enter the building. Cars will then exit by turning left onto Cross Street. Students may be dropped off at Eastern Avenue after 7:30 a.m.

Afternoon Procedures:

Bus Shuttle: We will shuttle the following students from Eastern Avenue to 770 Salem Street:

- Kindergarten students who take the bus home
- Kindergarten students who have siblings in first through eighth grade and are being picked up by their parents from the lower school campus
- Kindergarten students who go to the Champions after school program
- Kindergarten students who participate in the after school Student Action Club (when in session)

Once the students arrive at 770 Salem Street, they will be escorted by a staff member as a group (based on above designations) to their final location.

Afternoon Pick Up:

Kindergarten students, who do not fall into one of the four categories above, will be picked up directly from Eastern Avenue at 3:30 p.m. Parents should park and come to the designated pick up area, which will be reviewed during the orientation.

PARKING INFORMATION K-8

Our school property does not lend itself to parking availability. In the interest of safety, we will not be able to allow parking in *any* of the lots. Parking is available on surrounding streets. **Please be respectful to our neighbors when considering where to park.**

STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Parents should thoroughly familiarize themselves with the pick-up and drop-off points and visitor parking areas at the School, and carefully follow the School's instructions for operating a motor vehicle in the vicinity of the School and its students. Parents utilizing the entrance off Jacob Street in the morning (fishbowl side) should know that it is both a one-way and drop off only access road. Those parents wishing to park and enter the school themselves should park on a nearby street.

Certain faculty and staff members will greet buses in the morning and dismiss the children in the afternoon, ensuring that each student boards the appropriate bus in a safe and orderly fashion.

Unless the school is notified in writing by a parent or guardian, no child attending K – 2 will be allowed to disembark a bus without an adult. Parents or guardians should wait for the child on the *right side* of the bus, so the student will not be required to cross in front of the bus or behind it.

In the event that an adult guardian is not waiting for the child at the bus stop, the child will be returned to the School and the parents or emergency contact will be notified. If a parent, legal guardian, or authorized adult cannot be reached by 6:00 p.m., the police will be notified. Parents that fail to pick up their children from the bus stop three times which results in children being returned to the school will forfeit their privilege to use the bus for the rest of the year.

BUS INFORMATION:

SAFE BUS RIDING

Students at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School are expected to conduct themselves according to the Code of Values and to practice such virtues as respect, responsibility, and kindness, in all School settings – including on the bus. Following the School rules on the bus is essential not only for developing good character, but for ensuring students' safety.

Students are taught to wait for and board the bus in an orderly fashion. The following rules are posted in the front and the back of each bus, and students are expected to abide by them at all times. Bus transportation is a privilege and not something the school is required to provide

Parents that utilize the bus must notify the Business Manager in writing about any life threatening allergies children may have that would require the use of an EpiPen on the bus. Parents that fail to pick up their children from the bus stop, resulting in the child to be returned to the school, three times will forfeit the privilege of riding the bus. The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School utilizes Vocell Bus Company. They can be contacted at 781-393-0220.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR ON BUS

Introduction and Rationale

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School Student Bus Behavior Policy is consistent with the Code of Values. All behaviors expected of students during instructional time are also expected while riding the school bus.

Students will be given instruction on the proper behaviors expected on a periodic basis throughout the school year. Procedures for the enforcement of those behaviors, consequences in sequential steps, and limitations in the amount of misbehavior allowed, and rewards for good behavior will be similar in nature with those procedures that are implemented in the classrooms.

Parents play an important role in this process. When an incident of misbehavior occurs with a particular child, the parents of that child will be called. The incident will be discussed and the steps of increasing consequences will be reviewed. Parents are then expected to take an active role in communicating with the child about proper behavior while riding the school bus. Along the same lines, it is important that both students and parents communicate with the school director about acts of misconduct performed by other students. Communication about these incidents must take place quickly in order for the school director to enforce behavior policy effectively. All reports of misconduct that parents receive from their children must be reported immediately. Failure to do so will only add to an already existing problem.

Once an incident is reported, a school official, will talk with all parties involved including the bus driver to determine the nature of the occurrence and how to best proceed with the steps of consequence that are part of the policy. Parents of the student or students in question will be contacted immediately and asked to come to school for a conference to discuss the incident.

BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

Proper Bus Riding Behavior

Students must always respond to directions given by the bus driver, in lieu of an employee of the school being on the bus. The bus driver is the adult in charge of implementing all of the policies and procedures for good behavior during the course of the bus ride. Students must always respond to directions the first time they are asked.

Students are required to remain in their seats for the duration of the bus ride. Students may be assigned seats at the discretion of the school administration and the bus driver. Students should keep their feet and hands out of the aisle.

Students must maintain a “hands off” policy with other students. Students are to refrain from horseplay and rough play that can cause conflict and may lead to physical violence. Students must follow the directions of the bus driver or school personnel the first time the directions are given.

Students should never put or throw anything out of the window. No food, drink, games or toys are allowed on the bus.

PHYSICALLY DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR

- Students should not touch other students for any reason. Students should not engage in horseplay or roughhousing.
- Acts of violence against another student will result in the immediate activation of the steps of consequence.
- Serious acts of violence against another student may result in immediate removal of the student from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year.
- Physical intimidation against another student will result in the immediate activation of the steps of consequence.

DEROGATORY COMMENTS TOWARD OTHERS

- Derogatory comments toward others in any way are not allowed. Name-calling is not allowed.
- Laughing at the expense of another is not allowed. Imitating other students in a negative way is not allowed.
- Asking other students to join in any of the above activities is not allowed.

ILLEGAL ACTS

Acts of theft, vandalism, or use of illegal substances may result in the immediate removal of a student from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year. Any behaviors that disrupt other drivers will result in the

immediate activation of the steps of consequence.

STEPS OF CONSEQUENCE FOR BUS INFRACTIONS:

Step 1

Students who commit an act of misconduct will be warned.

Step 2

Students who commit a second act of misconduct will receive a bus suspension for one or two days. The Asst. Director will contact the parents of the student in order to have the student reinstated to ride the bus.

Step 3

Students who commit a third offense will receive a longer suspension of at least a week and not more than a month, except in extreme cases. The parents of the student must attend a conference with the Assistant Director in order to have the student reinstated to ride the bus.

Step 4

Students who commit a fourth offense or more will be removed from riding the bus for at least a month up to the remainder of the school year. Parents of the student must attend a reinstatement conference with the school director at the beginning of the following school year.

VIDEO TAPE POLICY (On Bus)

RATIONALE

The hiring of bus monitors is a financial impossibility. The lack of bus monitors could make it necessary to institute the use of video cameras to monitor behavior of the children on the bus, as well as the driver

PROCEDURE

The school can and may request the transportation provider to install cameras on the buses. If so, these tapes will be reviewed by the school director at the report of an act of misconduct. Facts discovered from the tapes will be used in deciding upon a course of action.

If a student breaks a rule on the bus, the driver will notify the School Director, and swift action will be taken. Serious misbehavior may lead to the suspension of bus riding privileges.

Parents with specific complaints about bus service should contact the School's Business Manager. Transportation is only allowed to and from the student's home address. No other address will be considered when determining eligibility or for transporting the student.

SECTION 10: CODE OF VALUES, SCHOOL RULES & REGULATIONS

The faculty and staff at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School are dedicated to providing our students with the skills necessary to reason, communicate, and live with dignity in a civil society. Central to this mission is the creation of a school community characterized by caring, discipline, order and respect.

The Code of Values has been designed to guide the efforts of teachers and staff in creating a safe, orderly environment and to reinforce the primary mission of the school, which is rigorous academic learning. The Code, which states clearly all school-wide rules governing student behavior, as well as, the consequences for breaking the rules, will serve as a compact among parents, students and our staff.

The Code of Values identifies eleven character values that will be at the center of our school's character education curriculum.

CODE OF VAULES

Responsibility and Respect:

Responsibility means you understand that you have agreed to do something even when it is not easy to do.

All members of the student body and staff are expected to be respectful to each other. Inappropriate language will not be tolerated. All members of our school community are encouraged to interact in a warm and friendly manner. Students are expected to demonstrate respect by walking quietly in the halls, without pushing, shoving, or hitting others. Respect for others begins with respect for one's self. This is shown in how you dress and behave both at school and at home. Respect for one's self and others is part of building strong personal character.

Honesty:

Telling the truth is essential. Cheating, stealing, lying or other forms of dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students are expected to be honest and tell the truth.

Gratitude:

Thankfulness for the gifts in life and the gift of life.

Kindness/Compassion:

At the school, students will learn to care for one another: to be proud of what they and their fellow students do in class and at school activities. Kindness for one's classmates is a building block for school spirit.

Perseverance:

Perseverance means that you learn to stick to a task until you get it done. Pushing on despite difficulty and hardship.

Courage:

Courage is the ability to know what the right thing to do is, and to be able to do this in the face of adversity. You will learn how to tell right from wrong and what it means to have the conviction of your beliefs.

Self-discipline:

Self-discipline means controlling one's wants and balancing what you want to do with what others may want to do. Self-discipline leads to self-control, which is essential to building strong character.

Good Citizenship/Generosity:

Generosity at the school also helps to develop school spirit and promote responsibility to the community. Citizenship also includes respect for your country and flag. Patriotism means loyalty to our

country and its principles. Students are encouraged to demonstrate patriotism by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance each day, reading about our many national heroes and developing an understanding of our democratic form of government.

Forgiveness:

The ability to forget wrongs done to us. Finding it in your heart to pardon or excuse.

Wonder / Hope:

To delight in beauty and mystery. To find the light in the darkness.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Each member of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School community has a role to play in creating a safe, orderly environment that is conducive to learning.

Classroom Teachers

The classroom teacher of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School is the center of the school’s character education and discipline policy. Teachers will continuously emphasize to both students and parents the school’s Code of Values. The Code of Values will be the basis for all classroom and school rules.

Three basic principles of classroom management and discipline will be implemented in each classroom. Students will be taught how to behave responsibly in each type of classroom activity, and these lessons will be reinforced throughout the year:

- Respect for Adults
- Respect for other Students
- Respect for Self

Teachers will strive to interact frequently with each student when the student is behaving correctly. When misbehavior occurs, teachers will calmly and consistently implement appropriate consequences for corrective action. Teachers will insure that no less than four positive interactions occur for each corrective action.

School Director

The role of the School Director with regard to discipline is to guide staff and students in their efforts to ensure student success, which is the mission of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School. The School Director will assist staff in responding to severe misbehavior, such as insubordination, physically dangerous and/or illegal acts, as well as any chronic or recurring problems. At the Upper and Lower School, the Assistant Director or Professional Development Coordinator will assume this role if the Director is not present.

In certain cases, the Director may initiate time-out periods, parent conferences, in-school suspensions, out of school suspension or recommend expulsion. The Director may also contact the appropriate law enforcement authorities if circumstances warrant. At the Upper School, the Assistant Director will assume this role if the Director is not present.

Support Staff

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School’s administrative staff includes an Assistant Director, two Professional Development Coordinators, an Assistant Director to the High School, a Business Manager, a Human Resource Director, a Facilities Manager, a Special Education Director, 504 Coordinator, four nurses, and other support personnel to assist with instruction and help meet students’ needs.

All members of the administrative staff play an important role in evaluating the disciplinary policies and procedures and assisting staff in dealing with chronic misbehavior.

A nurse is available to faculty, staff and students for consultation on such matters as personal hygiene, nutrition, substance abuse, depression, child abuse, or neglect. The nurse also provides medical care for students who are ill or injured. If the nurse is not on school grounds, their designee will assist students in need and will determine whether parents should be contacted and the student sent home.

Teacher Assistance Team (Tat)/Child Study Team

Even after establishing a positive classroom environment with clear behavioral expectations, one or more students may still have academic difficulties or behave inappropriately. In such cases, your child's teacher may wish to explore additional academic or behavioral interventions that may help the student(s) be more responsible. The School's **Teacher Assistance Team (TAT)** may be convened to assist in this effort.

The TAT will include the teacher dealing with the problem, the grade level Lead Teacher and at least two other teachers, and in some cases other staff members who work with the student. The TAT will help develop creative approaches to assist your child at school. Each Grade Level Team meets and discusses behavioral issues once a week for a minimum of 30 minutes. The Team recommends accommodations for the teacher. If after 30 school days the accommodations are unsuccessful, the lead teacher brings concerns to the Professional Development Coordinator (PDC) or Assistant Director who then refers the documentation to the **Child Study Team (CST)**. This Team made up of the Special Education Director and specialists (psychology, OT, S/L, &/or PT) to determine if additional accommodations or recommendations are warranted. If success is not met then the next step is a referral to the special education department.

To convene a Child Study Team, PDC/Assistant Director should contact the Special Education Director to review concerns. The CST will meet weekly.. Meetings will follow a prescribed format.

Special Education Services

Mystic Valley provides academic support to students with special needs that will enable all students to benefit from a variety of classroom-based activities and to learn from each other. It is our belief that we all have the ability to learn and that we all have valuable learning experiences to share.

The special education staff works in collaboration with individual classroom teachers, to coordinate curriculum objectives, introduce and monitor modifications and to identify alternative teaching strategies. When necessary, supportive services may be provided outside the regular classrooms for short periods of a student's school day.

The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School contracts with local providers for psychological services (PSYCH), speech & language (S/L), occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), and other related services as identified by the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Accommodation Plan.

The decision to refer a child for a team evaluation to determine the need for special education services usually originates with the classroom teacher (see Teacher Assistance Team/Child Study Team). Parents may request a special education evaluation and consult with the Special Education Director.

Upon receipt of evaluation results, if the parent disagrees with an evaluation completed by the school district, then the parent may request an independent educational evaluation. The parent may obtain an independent educational evaluation at private expense at any time. When a parent provides a request for public funding for an independent evaluation, the district abides by the provisions for a sliding fee scale set by the Department of Education (see Education Law/Regulation 603 CMR 28.04) based upon documentation provided by the parent of the family's financial status. The district shall either agree to pay for the independent educational evaluation or within five school days, proceed to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals to show that its evaluation was comprehensive and appropriate. If the Bureau of Special Education Appeals finds that the school district's evaluation was comprehensive and appropriate, then the school district shall not be obligated to pay for the independent educational evaluation requested by the parent.

504 Accommodation Plans are designed to develop and implement a program of instructional services, including general classroom accommodations, to assist students with mental or physical impairments. In order to be eligible for a 504 Accommodation Plan, the student must be found eligible under Section 504. To be found eligible under Section 504, the student must have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one

or more major life activities. Major life activities include, but are not limited to: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working and learning.

State and federal laws prohibit discrimination in education (M.G.L. c.76, s.5). The Mystic Valley Regional Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, sex, gender identity, homelessness, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation with regard to students with special education needs.

Parents

As customers of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, parents will be encouraged and expected to participate fully in the education of their children. The support and cooperation of parents are vital to helping each student reach his or her full potential. Parents are being expected to support the academic learning of their children by maintaining high expectations for both the students and the School. Parents also need to serve as role models for their children. Parents will be kept informed of students' efforts through conferences, monthly progress reports, report cards, phone calls, and notes, and/or e-mail. Parents must supply the school with e-mail address if they have them, and inform the school of any changes.

Parents may be asked to help teach their child specific skills, such as remembering homework, learning to be more independent or managing anger in a mature way. If parents are asked to assist staff, specific information will be provided on ways to help the student.

If there is a severe or recurring problem, parents will be asked to help staff teach the student an alternative set of behaviors. In such cases, it is important to recognize that teaching a student to behave appropriately as a contributing member of the school community will enable him or her to succeed in school. By working together, parents and staff can help the student acquire the skills that will increase opportunities for success throughout life. Failure to comply with the specifics of the School's plan for teaching appropriate behavior may result in the student's expulsion.

Parents who have concerns about their child's adjustment to the School or any aspect of the school's program and policies will be asked to discuss their concerns first with their child's teacher. Every teacher at the School will be prepared to work with parents and will respond to parental concerns appropriately and expeditiously. The School's Lead Teachers, Professional Development Coordinator and the School Director will also be available if there are issues that exceed the scope of a parent- teacher conference.

RESPONSIBILITIES IN COMMON AREAS

The School's common areas include the playground, hallways, rest rooms, and the multipurpose rooms. Because students from every grade and class will be using these areas under the supervision of various faculty and staff, it is important to establish rules and expectations that are commonly understood and consistently applied. With such rules in place, staff can focus on encouraging good character among students rather than correcting misbehavior.

Staff will continuously encourage appropriate behavior in the School's common areas through positive and friendly interactions with students. Verbal praise will be used to recognize students who exercise courtesy, safety, and respect. The School Director will visit classrooms or use the intercom to compliment good behavior in the School's common areas. In addition, small rewards will be granted for especially good conduct; for example, two or three times a year, the entire student body will be allowed an extra ten-minute recess at the end of the day as a reward for consistently good conduct on the playground. Or, when students demonstrate appropriate behavior during lunches over a long period, the School Director may provide ice cream as a special treat.

Following are the School's goals for student conduct in each of the common areas.

Playground: Students will play safely in all games and on all equipment, showing consideration and respect for others.

Hallways: The hallways of the School will be a safe and quiet environment where people interact with courtesy and respect. Walk with hands clasped or by your side.

Restrooms: The restrooms at the School will be clean and safe.

Meals: Breakfasts, lunches, and snacks at the School will be enjoyed in a safe, clean and friendly environment where people interact with courtesy, manners, and respect.

Assemblies: Students will demonstrate respectful behavior during assemblies by listening, participating, and following directions.

Before and After School: Students will arrive at and depart from the School in a safe and orderly manner.

ENCOURAGING APPROPRIATE CONDUCT:

At the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, students will be encouraged to make appropriate choices regarding their personal conduct. Following are the chief means by which faculty and staff will ensure order and support the development of good character at the School.

STUDENT OF THE DAY/ MYSTIC MERIT AWARDS

At the end of each day, teachers will grant Student of the Day Awards (K-6) to acknowledge and reward students for demonstrating exceptionally responsible behavior, trying their best, cooperating, or showing respect. Award-winning students will receive special certificates.

In addition, the school will announce a Student of the Week (K-8). Each week there is an assigned Virtue for the students to strive for. The homeroom teacher will grant a Student of the Week who exemplifies the specific virtue. The students are then announced over the loud speaker during the morning announcements and rewarded with a certificate.

Any student who has earned five Student of the Day Awards will receive a High Five Mystic Merit Award. The names of the High Five winners will be displayed in the school.

CLASSROOM POSITIVE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

At the beginning of each day, K-6 teachers will issue all students green cards, indicating a clean slate for student conduct. These cards will be placed in a pocket wall chart in the front of the classroom. Teachers will maintain a wall chart with every student's name on it and a record of who maintains their green cards throughout the day. These students will be recognized as members of the Green Team and will be able to receive certain classroom rewards. After five green days the class may have a special celebration.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS: CARD CHANGES

The attending teacher will first adapt a proactive plan to encourage good behavior. Praise statements will be made in the ratio of four positive to each negative behavior addressed. Nevertheless if a student still misbehaves, teachers will first attempt a proactive approach. Teachers, when appropriate, will give a verbal warning to the student. If the student continues to show noncompliance, then they will receive a card change.

Green Card

Students begin each day on the green card. This card indicates the student has followed all school rules. The student is respectful to himself, his classmates and his teachers.

Yellow Card

A student has a card change to yellow after receiving a warning from the teacher. This warning is for each separate behavior during the day. Behavior is always discussed with students before cards are changed. When students have a change to yellow an immediate "skill builder" and discussion or writing assignment should follow for grades 3-6. These skill builders should take less than 3 minutes to complete.

Blue Card

A student has a card change to blue after the initial warning and the turn to yellow. The blue card indicates some significant difficulty following directions or the school rules. After a card is changed to blue, the student must complete additional immediate discussion and/or writing assignments. This infraction will also require a loss of 10 minutes of free time determined by the assistant director. This is not an infraction for recess detention. The student can sit out of recess with the class for 10 minutes with an adult observing.

Red Card

A student with a red card is demonstrating severe difficulty following the rules of the school. This student should have some immediate redirection from the teacher. The red card should also result in:

1. immediate “skill builder” and/or writing assignment
2. immediate phone call or note home to the parents signed and returned
3. loss of 30 minutes of free time/recess.

No Color

A student who does not change his behavior after the red card should then move to no color. This is when the student receives an office referral to a member of the Leadership Team. No color generally means in-school or out of school suspension. This suspension should only happen for the most serious cases of misbehavior or when the misbehavior is re-occurring.

THE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN: 7th –12th Grade

The attending teacher will first adapt a proactive plan to encourage good behavior. Praise statements will be made in the ratio of four positive to each negative behavior addressed. Nevertheless if a student still misbehaves, teachers will first attempt a proactive approach. Teachers, when appropriate, will give a verbal warning to the student. If the student continues to show noncompliance, then they will receive an A-Plan warning, which will be kept in the student’s planner.

The student will be asked to report to office under the following conditions:

- At the discretion of the teacher depending on the degree and severity of any A Plan Warning – possible consequence will be given and the parent may be contacted. Examples of this would be, but not limited to, disrespectful behavior, physical or dangerous behavior.
- If a student receives 3 A Plan Warnings in a five day period or five A-Plan warning in a month, they will receive a one hour detention.
- Once the student is given the consequence, an administrator will draw a line and initialize it. This will allow the student to start a new sequence of warnings and not penalize them for previous warnings.

Possible consequences for excessive A-plan warnings may include after school detention(s), in school and out of school suspension(s), loss of privileges to participate in school sponsored sports, clubs, school sponsored events and/or any extra curricula activity.

All A-Plan warnings will be kept in the student’s planner. Students that fail to bring their planner to school or class will receive a one-hour detention. A replacement planner will be issued on which a parent signature will be required. Failure to return the replacement planner with a parent signature will result in a one-hour after-school detention. If the planner is lost, students will be required to purchase a new one from the school, and will receive a one hour detention for each day until they complete the purchase. Students that lose or misplace previous days of the planner, from the current month, will receive a one hour detention. Parents will be required to sign their child’s planner every weekend. Failure to do so will result in a one-hour detention for the student.

CLASS-WIDE GOAL OF THE MONTH

Each class at the School will be encouraged to identify a specific goal toward which it will strive during each month. As students identify class-wide goals, teachers will help them understand how their objectives relate to school-wide goals. For example, if a class chooses to focus on timely homework completion as its goal for the month, teachers will discuss how that relates to the school-wide goal of always trying one’s best. Once the class has determined its monthly objective, teachers will plan to conduct a weekly lesson on how to achieve the goal, including such exercises as role playing, positive practice, related read-aloud stories, writing assignments,

or art projects. Students will collectively explore ways to reach their goal, practicing problem solving, planning, and establishing benchmarks for achievement.

At the end of each month, each class will evaluate their progress through discussion or a simple evaluation procedure established by the students. During this process, students may decide to continue striving toward their goal or shift their focus to a new objective. Upon achieving its goal of the month, the class will be presented with a certificate documenting its accomplishments.

CORRECTING INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT:

CONSEQUENCES FOR MINOR MISBEHAVIOR

It is expected that the great majority of students at the School will strive to meet the expectations for responsibility and self-discipline outlined herein. It is also understood, however, that no single set of procedures will be effective in helping every student develop the skills and attitudes necessary for success. Therefore, a series of interventions will be designed for students who have not been motivated by the school-wide procedures. As teachers and faculty adapt disciplinary procedures to meet individual needs, the focus will remain positive and an emphasis will be placed on the continuing need for calm and consistent consequences.

Students will learn that certain actions are unacceptable at the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School and misbehavior has consequences that are neither amusing nor pleasant. Students, who engage in any type of misbehavior, whether minor or severe, will be required to make amends and/or restore the situation. Restitution may involve an apology; community or school service; or fixing, replacing, and/or paying for damage caused. The School Director and/or teacher will determine the type of restitution required for a particular infraction.

If possible, the restitution assignment will be communicated to the student's parents prior to his or her completion of the task. In all cases, parents will be informed of the child's inappropriate behavior and the restitution requirement.

CONSEQUENCES FOR SEVERE MISBEHAVIOR

Most misbehavior will be handled with discussion or the use of mild consequences. However, severe misbehavior will be met swiftly with equally severe consequences. Such behavior is defined as belonging to at least one of the following categories:

- Insubordinate behavior
- Physically dangerous behavior
- Illegal behavior

Insubordinate behavior is the direct refusal to comply with a reasonable staff instruction within a specified period of time. In such cases, the staff member involved will first explain to the student why his or her actions are inappropriate and could issue a mild consequence or a more severe consequence for the offense. If the student continues to disregard the staff member's instruction, he or she will be sent to the office and be spoken to by a member of the leadership team.

Insubordination is a breakdown in communication. When a student has been referred to the office for this offense, the School Director will arrange a conference between the student, the staff member involved, and possibly the student's parent or guardian. The purpose of the conference will be to establish a plan that will help the student communicate more responsibly in the future.

In cases of physically dangerous behavior – fighting, assault, and physical intimidation – staff will firmly inform the students to stop the physical altercation. If the students do not respond, staff will use professional judgment to determine whether or not to intervene physically. Staff will not be required to take action that could be physically dangerous; in such cases, another student will be sent immediately for assistance. The School Director will notify parents and make all decisions regarding whether to contact the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

If a staff member is aware that a student has been or is engaged in illegal activity, the staff member will refer the

case to the School Director's office. The Director will notify the student's parent or guardian and make all decisions regarding whether to contact the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

EXCLUSIONARY TIMEOUT

At the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, exclusionary timeouts will be used for students who need a neutral environment to help manage their own behavior, or to cool down to reflect on inappropriate behavior. Such timeouts involve removing the student from the instructional setting to a supervised area, such as the back of a classroom or the office. An exclusionary timeout may also be imposed as a consequence of misbehavior.

Faculty, staff, and school leaders will adhere to the following procedures when imposing an exclusionary timeout. No student shall ever be unsupervised during a timeout situation.

Records of the number of exclusionary timeouts from reinforcement imposed and the students involved will be maintained and reviewed by the Leadership Team. These records will be used to make judgments about the efficacy of the School's timeout procedures for helping students learn to be responsible.

DETENTION

Assigned detentions take place during the following times: before school, recess, after school, and/or on Saturday.

SUSPENSION

In response to cases of severe misbehavior in which a student violates school policies, rules or regulations, or otherwise interferes with the orderly operation of the School, the School Director or a designee may suspend or temporarily remove the student from school for up to ten calendar days. Suspension will be regarded as a serious consequence and students will be removed immediately. If there are extenuating circumstances preventing immediate removal from the school grounds, the Director or designee will assume full responsibility for the student until he or she is removed. The student's parents will be required to meet with the School Director and any staff members involved in the suspension prior to the student's return to the School. A suspended student must make up missed work, and will not be allowed to be on the school grounds or to attend any school-related functions at any time during the suspension. A suspension is also considered an absence from school. In addition, the student may be required to complete homework related to the disciplinary infraction. In the event that a student receives 5 days of suspensions in a marking period, a report will be filed with the Special Education Coordinator in accordance with state and federal law.

Suspension could be an automatic consequence for:

- Disrespect towards a teacher or faculty member
- Any physical behavior (hitting, pushing, etc...)
- Foul or inappropriate behavior

RE-ADMITTANCE MEETINGS FOLLOWING A SCHOOL SUSPENSION

After serving a suspension, a re-admittance meeting must take place in order for a student to be admitted back into the school building. A parent or legal guardian must be in attendance. If extenuating circumstances exist that prevent a parent or legal guardian from attending the re-admittance meeting, a proxy may be chosen to represent the parent or legal guardian with the approval of the Director. An educational advocate or anyone acting in such a capacity is **not** allowed to accompany a parent or legal guardian to a re-admittance meeting. Parents or legal guardians hold the sole responsibility to support the standards of conduct that the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School adheres to in both policy and practice. Parent communication with the School Director is an essential part of this process. The School Director holds the authority to determine the parameters and settings of personal meetings with parents. The School Director acts as the chair and school authority while conducting re-admittance meetings. The School Director decides the order of discussion topics and at which point the student in question joins the School Director and the parent(s) or legal guardian in the re-admittance meeting. In the event of non-compliance on the part of the parents or guardians regarding the above procedures for a re-admittance meeting, the School Director will issue restrictive sanctions for the student in question until compliance is met. These restrictive sanctions will be solely directed towards any and all non-educational activities and will not be directed towards the student's academic program. These activities include, but are not limited to:

- Recess
- All extra-curricular sports
- All extra-curricular clubs
- All extra-curricular arts activities
- All non-educational classroom celebrations
- All non-educational school activities
- All non-educational occasional or special event activities

EXPULSION

Expulsion is defined as the removal of the right and obligation of a student to attend the School under the conditions set by the School's Board. The School Director will have final authority in recommending the expulsion of a student to the Board in accordance with State statute. A student who brings a weapon to school or uses an implement in school in any way that makes another student or staff member feel threatened will be subject to an expulsion hearing before the Board of Directors. An expelled student will not be permitted on school grounds or at any school-related functions for the duration of his or her expulsion. If the expulsion is for a limited time, the expelled student may choose to attend another school during this period.

POLICIES AND STATE LAW RELATING TO ILLEGAL DRUGS, WEAPONS, ASSAULT, CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES AND EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS M.G.L. c.71 §37H

(a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(e) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

M.G.L. c.71 §37H1/2

Chapter 71, Section 37½: Suspension/Expulsion for a Felony Charge or Conviction

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that

such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion. Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to such student.

Section 37H3/4. (a) Suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H1/2.

(b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.

(c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

(d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10

school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

(e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

(f) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

Hazing

Hazing is illegal and never tolerated at Mystic Valley Regional Charter School. Students who organize or participate in hazing will be suspended out of school for up to ten (10) days with notification of the police.

M.G.L. Chapter 269: Section 17 Hazing defined

Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment. The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

M.G.L Chapter 269: Section 18 Failure to report hazing

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

TIERED CONSEQUENCES

The tables outline the specific procedures that will be applied in response to severe misbehavior.

Problem	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
<p>Insubordinate Behavior e.g., disrespect toward staff members and peers, bullying behavior, refusal to follow direction, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to the Office . Parent notified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to the Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to the Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . 1-3 day suspension possible depending on the severity of the offense, plus mandatory meeting among parent, student, staff member involved, and Administration prior to student re-entering school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . 1-3 day suspension (or longer depending on the severity of the offense), and mandatory meeting among parent, student, staff member involved, and Administration prior to student re-entering school. . Administration convened to establish instructional discipline action plan; parent and student (if appropriate) are apprised of the plan. . Parent may be asked to accompany child to school to assist with teaching appropriate behavior . Failure to comply with the specifics of the instructional discipline action plan may result in expulsion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Long-term suspension up to 10 days or expulsion, and mandatory meeting between parent, staff and Director prior to student re-entering school . Board of Directors and MVRCS are notified regarding possible expulsion . Parent must attend school with child to assist with teaching appropriate behavior in the classroom

Problem	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense
Physically Dangerous Behavior e.g., fighting, assault, physical intimidation, bullying behavior, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to School Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately . 1-3 day suspension (or longer depending on the severity of the offense), mandatory meeting between parent and Administration prior to student re-entering school . Administration establish instructional discipline plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to School Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately . 3-5 day suspension (or longer depending on the severity of the offense), and mandatory meeting between parent and Administration prior to student re-entering school. . Administration convened to establish instructional discipline action plan; parent and student (if appropriate) are apprised of the plan . Parent may be asked to accompany student to school to assist with teaching appropriate behavior . Failure to comply with the specifics of the instructional discipline action plan may result in expulsion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Student sent to School Office . Parent notified to pick up student immediately . Long-term suspension up to 10 days or expulsion, and mandatory meeting between parent, staff and Director prior to student re- entering school . Board of Directors and MVRCS are notified regarding possible expulsion . Parent must attend school with child to assist with teaching appropriate behavior in the classroom

Problem	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense
<p data-bbox="224 260 479 646">Illegal Acts e.g., theft, vandalism, use of illegal substances, violation of a student's or staff member's civil rights, harassment and physical abuse against another student based on their race, disability, color, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.</p> <p data-bbox="224 680 479 890">The School Director may contact the appropriate authorities depending on the nature of the offense and the age of the student involved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="506 260 776 317">. Student sent to School Office <li data-bbox="506 350 776 436">. Parent notified to pick up student immediately <li data-bbox="506 470 776 709">. 3-5 day suspension (or longer depending on the severity of the offense) and mandatory meeting between parent and Administration prior to student re-entering school <li data-bbox="506 743 776 926">. Administration convened to establish instructional discipline action plan; parent and student (if appropriate) are apprised of the plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="799 260 1052 317">. Student sent to School Office <li data-bbox="799 350 1052 436">. Parent notified to pick up student immediately <li data-bbox="799 470 1052 709">4-7 day suspension (or longer depending on the severity of the offense) and mandatory meeting between parent and Administration prior to student re-entering school <li data-bbox="799 743 1052 953">. Administration convened to establish instructional discipline action plan; parent and student (if appropriate) are apprised of the plan. <li data-bbox="799 987 1052 1136">. Parent may be asked to accompany student to school to assist with teaching appropriate behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1075 260 1328 317">. Student sent to School Office <li data-bbox="1075 350 1328 436">. Parent notified to pick up student immediately <li data-bbox="1075 470 1328 709">. Long-term suspension up to 10 days or expulsion, and mandatory meeting between parent, staff member, and Director prior student re-entering school <li data-bbox="1075 743 1328 863">. Board of Directors and MVRCS are notified regarding possible expulsion <li data-bbox="1075 896 1328 1045">. Parent must attend school with child to assist with appropriate behavior in the classroom

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

PRIORITY STATEMENT

It is the goal of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School to provide a learning environment free from any form of bullying by either students or school staff. Such an environment of civility and good manners is most conducive to learning and high academic achievement. The school will support this goal in a variety of aspects, including the establishment of clear procedures for reporting and response, age-appropriate student instruction, staff development and parent or guardian involvement. The school's code of values, character education program, behavior management procedures and the present plan constitute a comprehensive approach to the establishment and maintenance of such an environment.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying, as defined by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

Definition of Cyber-Bullying Cyber-bullying, as defined by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Scope

The bullying intervention and prevention policies apply to all sites and activities under the supervision of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School. Bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

All staff members who become aware of bullying are required to report it to the Director, Assistant Director, Dean of Students or their designee, or to the Director or designee when the Assistant Director or Dean of Students is the alleged aggressor, or to the Board of Trustees or designee when the Director is the alleged aggressor. These individuals will conduct a prompt and reasonable investigation. The requirement to report the incident as provided does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline. When appropriate, referral will be made to a law enforcement agency. Retaliation against a

person who reports bullying, or who is a witness to or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

The school expects students, parents or guardians who witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation to report it to the Director, Assistant Director, Dean of Students or their designee, or to the Director or designee when the Assistant Director or Dean of Students is the alleged aggressor, or to the Board of Trustees or designee when the Director is the alleged aggressor. Students, parents or guardians and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with the Director, Assistant Director, Dean of Students or their designee, or with the Director or designee when the Assistant Director or Dean of Students is the alleged aggressor, or with the Board of Trustees or designee when the Director is the alleged aggressor. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged student aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Anonymous reports, either regarding bullying or retaliation, may be made by mail to: Superintendent's Office, Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, 4 Laurell St. Malden, MA, 02148 or by e-mail to anonreport@mvracs.org.

ANNUAL STAFF TRAINING

Annual training for all school staff, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals as well as annual written notice of the Plan is incorporated into an extensive training period prior to the start of the school year. This training includes a focus on staff duties under the Plan and bullying of students by school staff, an overview of steps that the Director, Assistant Director, Dean of Students or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of how bullying prevention curricula and character education will be integrated for students throughout the school.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development will build the skills of all school staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. Such development will build on the school's character education program and include age-appropriate strategies to prevent and intervene in bullying incidents, cyber-bullying incidence and nature, internet safety, research on students at risk for bullying, and information on power differentials and interactions among witnesses, student aggressors and targets of bullying. Additional areas for professional development include the use of positive behavioral interventions, applying constructive disciplinary strategies and maintaining a safe and caring community, and engaging staff and those responsible for the implementation of this plan to distinguish between acceptable managerial behaviors and bullying behaviors.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Students who are targets or aggressors in a bullying situation and require counseling resources may be referred to the school's on-site contracted counseling professionals for appropriate services as well as external counseling/medical professionals. Targets, student aggressors and appropriate family members of involved students will have access to counseling as needed. Counseling will be arranged in consultation with school authorities and parents. Evaluation and services will be coordinated through the Director and Assistant Directors in consultation with parents, school nurses and others, including IEP teams and Special Education professionals as necessary.

ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Daily character education classes incorporate age-appropriate strategies and lessons on the necessary skills and habits required for the maintenance of respectful communication and a caring community. Friendship and healthy relationships are promoted through examples, positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior and empowering students to take action when witnessing acts of bullying or retaliation.

A school-wide accountability plan and card system promote the ongoing development of good habits along with appropriate consequences for disrespectful or negative behavior. This system is an integral part of every school day and uniformly implemented across all grades. Students are consistently presented with clear expectations and established school and classroom routines. Such routines and expectations maintain

a safe environment and provide essential boundaries and encouragement of appropriately respectful behavior.

RESPONDING AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

Reports of bullying or retaliation by either a student or staff aggressor may be made orally or in writing. Oral reports will be recorded in writing. The school has established a Bullying Incident Reporting Form for the recording of details regarding specific incidents. The form is available on the school website and at the main office of all school campuses. The Assistant Director, the Dean of Students or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying while maintaining a written record of the investigation except when a reported bullying incident involves the Assistant Director or the Dean of Students as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the Director or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim. If the Director is the alleged aggressor, the Board of Trustees or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim.

Upon the reporting of an incident, steps will be taken immediately to ensure the target's safety and assess the target's need for assurance. If after investigation, the allegations are substantiated, the investigator will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and determine what disciplinary action is necessary. A range of disciplinary actions may be taken, including but not limited to in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, meeting with parents and other authorities and expulsion. The target's safety needs will be addressed through meetings with parents, teachers, students, relevant authorities and counselors, as appropriate. These meetings will address such issues as creating a personal plan, seating, scheduling, and additional steps as needed to promote the target's safety. The Director or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying a student who a) reports bullying, b) provides information during an investigation of bullying, c) witnesses or provides reliable information about an act of bullying by a student or a staff member. Parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor, if a student, will be notified about the results and actions taken to address the current issue as well as to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation. Discipline will be consistent with the school's established code of conduct and behavioral expectations/procedures, or the School's employee handbook.

Whoever investigates a reported bullying incident will remind the alleged student or staff aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation and their obligation to be truthful. False accusations of bullying or retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation will be addressed by the school's disciplinary procedures which include, but are not limited to, meetings with parents, detentions, suspensions, and other disciplinary action as needed. Protection of all students will be provided, regardless of their status under the law.

NOTIFICATIONS

The school's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be distributed in summary form to all parents each year and also published in plenary form along with pertinent materials on the school's website. Every other year the Plan will be subject to updating as needed. Parents and guardians will also be notified of opportunities to learn more about the school's Plan as it relates to parental responsibilities, with a particular focus on internet safety and the encouragement of good habits at home. Parent/Guardian information on the dynamics of bullying, as well as ways to reinforce the school's prevention plan at home will also be provided. The Plan will also be included in each year's Parent/Student Handbook as part of the school's annual preparation for signature of the School and Home Compact.

DEFINITIONS

Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

Target is student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Hostile Environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying provides information during the investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

School Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, or paraprofessionals.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR SEXUAL ABUSE

At MVRCS we understand sexual harassment to be a form of sexual discrimination that occurs when one person subjects another person to unwanted sexual attention, coerces him or her into sexual activity, and/or punishes his or her refusal. Sexual harassment may be manifested verbally (which includes, but is not limited to, propositions, innuendoes, and/or subtle pressure for sexual activity) and/ or physically (which includes, but is not limited to, touching, patting, pinching, brushing against another's body, physical assault, rape, subtle pressure for sexual activity, or any type of sexual abuse).

The accusation of sexual harassment (or sexual abuse) is a serious one, and all cases will be given immediate individual attention with the strictest confidentiality imposed. A student should contact his/her teacher or another member of the school faculty. Parents should call the School Administration should they wish to file a complaint of any possible sexual harassment or sexual abuse.

Note: ALL instances of sexual harassment deserve an official response. Some instances of sexual harassment may best be dealt with through mediation, others, by direct involvement of the Director (or his/her designee).

By law the MVRCS is required to give the legal definition of sexual harassment, which for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is as follows:

“Sexual harassment” means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

(a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions; (b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment.

Since we are an educational institution, the definition of sexual harassment also includes the following:

Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition for participation in School programs or activities; or such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, education or participation in School programs or activities by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive environment.

Under these definitions, direct or implied requests by a faculty member in exchange for actual or promised benefits, such as favorable evaluations of course requirements or favorable recommendations constitutes sexual harassment and/or sexual abuse.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a workplace or educational environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to males or females may also constitute sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct, which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of the circumstances including the severity of the conduct and its

pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances - whether they involve physical touching or not
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life
- Comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences
- Discussion of one's sexual activities

Sexual Abuse includes the infliction of sexual contact upon a person by forcible compulsion or the engaging in sexual contact with a person who is below a specified age or who is incapable of giving consent because of age or mental or physical incapacity. MVRCS will not tolerate any act of sexual abuse, whether such is committed by a faculty member or by another student.

All employees and students should take special note that, as stated above, retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment, and retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the School.

COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT OR SEXUAL ABUSE

MVRCS is committed to equitable, swift and confidential resolution of claims of harassment. Any student or employee experiencing harassment should follow any or all of these measures:

1. Let the offender know you want the behavior to stop. Be clear and direct. Do not apologize.
2. If you are not comfortable confronting the offender alone, ask a friend to accompany you, or write a letter to the offender, keeping a copy.
3. Make a record of when, where and how you were mistreated; include witnesses (if any), direct quotes, and other evidence.
4. If you are a student, notify your advisor or the Director, or if you are uncomfortable doing so, speak with another adult. A member of the Leadership Team or a third party will most likely be requested to negotiate the matter.
5. If you are an adult, notify the Director, your immediate supervisor or a member of the Leadership Team. The Director will initiate an investigation into the complaint and will insure appropriate follow-up measures are taken. Parents may telephone the Director to report any complaint.
6. If your complaint concerns any act of sexual abuse or assault, report it immediately to the Director, your advisor, or your parent(s). If you are unable to do so, tell a friend and ask the friend to speak with the Director.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

State and federal laws prohibit discrimination in education (M.G.L. c.76, s.5). Mystic Valley Regional Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, sex, gender identity, homelessness, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation with regard to admission, access to programs or activities, or employment opportunities. The school annually evaluates all aspects of our K-12 program to ensure all students have equal access.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by one of our employees or students, we will take such action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may range from counseling to termination from employment, suspension or expulsion, and may include such other

forms of disciplinary action, as we deem appropriate under the circumstances.

STATE AND FEDERAL REMEDIES

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has short time periods for filing a claim (EEOC and OCR - 180 days; MCAD - 6 months).

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
10 Congress Street - 10th Floor
Boston, MA 02114 (617) 565-3200 (Employment Cases)

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) Boston Office:
One Ashburton Place - Room 601
Boston, MA 02108 (617) 727-3990
(Employment Cases)

Office for Civil Rights (OCR) U.S. Department of Education Regional Office
John W. McCormick Post Office and Courthouse
Room 22
Boston, MA 02109-4557 (617) 223-9662
(Student Cases)

DISCIPLINING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

All students are expected to comply with the school district's disciplinary rules, unless the Individualized Educational Plan ("IEP") for a special education student specifically indicates that the student is not expected to comply with such rules, or is expected to comply with modified rules.

Absent an IEP modification, a special education student who violates the code of discipline may be suspended for up to ten (10) cumulative school days in a school year, in the same manner as a student in the general education program. "Suspension" is defined as any action that results in the student's removal from the program described in his/her IEP, including in-school suspension, exclusion from transportation services that prohibits the student from participating in his/her prescribed program, and placement in an interim alternative educational setting.

In cases involving the possession of weapons, drugs or serious bodily injury, special education students may be removed immediately to an interim alternative educational setting for up to forty-five (45) school days. In any case, the school or the parent/guardian may seek an injunction from the courts or an order from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) to change a student's placement for disciplinary reasons.

- Therefore, the IEP for each special education student must indicate whether the student's disability requires a modification of the discipline code. If the student is expected to meet modified behavioral requirements, such modifications must be described in the student's IEP.
- To ensure that the discipline of special education students meets the requirements of state and federal law, the assistant director must provide prompt written notice to the special education administrator any time such a student commits an offense that may result in a suspension.
- A Manifestation Determination will be held for those students who are to be considered for a possible 45 day placement, for students whose suspensions have exceeded ten consecutive school days or for whom a pattern has developed for suspensions exceeding ten cumulative days. The purpose of the Manifestation Determination is to determine the relationship between the student's disability and their behavior. The school must convene an IEP Team meeting before the expiration of the ten day period.

SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

As noted above, consistent with state and federal law and regulations, a special education student may be suspended for up to ten (10) cumulative days in a school year. If a special education student is suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a school year, or for shorter periods that constitute a pattern of removal and accumulate to more than ten (10) school days, this is considered to constitute a change in placement.

An assistant director in conjunction with the special education director may request to reconvene the student's IEP Team to consider unique circumstances and to give consideration to a change in placement for a special education student who has violated the school's code of discipline. Whenever an assistant director in conjunction with the special education director contemplates changing a special education student's placement through the disciplinary process, the special education director must notify the student's parent/guardian of the procedural protections available to special education students, by sending the parent/guardian a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards.

Further, the school must convene a TEAM meeting before the expiration of the ten (10) day period, and must comply with the following procedures, in addition to those contained in the school district's disciplinary rules, before a suspension is imposed.

MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION

Whenever a suspension would constitute a change in placement for a student, relevant members of the evaluation TEAM, as determined by the school district and the student's parent/guardian, must convene within ten (10) school days of the date of the behavioral incident and determine –

- whether the student's behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to his/her disability; or
- whether the student's behavior was the direct result of the school district's failure to implement the IEP.

In making this determination, the TEAM must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, staff observations, and any relevant information provided by the parent/guardian. If the answer to either question is "yes," the student's behavior is considered to be a manifestation of his/her disability.

The TEAM's determination should be made available to the assistant director who is considering the student's suspension before a disciplinary decision is made. Depending upon the TEAM's determination, suspension (or expulsion) may or may not be implemented, as explained below.

Circumstances When Suspension in Excess of Ten (10) Days May Be Imposed

If the TEAM determines that the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability, the student may be suspended (or expelled), in the same manner and for the same duration as for non-disabled students, in accordance with the procedures set forth in the school district's disciplinary rules. The school district, however, must continue to provide the student with special education services in a new placement during the term of the suspension (or expulsion).

In addition, as discussed below, the student must receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and a behavioral intervention plan to address the student's behavior, so that it does not reoccur.

Circumstances When Suspension In Excess Of Ten (10) Days May Not Be Imposed

A student may not be suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive days in a school year, or ten (10) cumulative days when a pattern of removal is occurring, if the evaluation TEAM determines that the student's behavior is a manifestation of his/her disability.

In such case, the TEAM must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan, as discussed below. If an assessment already has been conducted and a plan developed, the TEAM must review and modify the plan, as necessary, to address the student's behavior. Unless the TEAM decides on a new placement for the student, as part of the behavioral intervention plan, or the student is

eligible for automatic removal by the school district based on the type of offense, the student must be returned to his/her last agreed upon placement.

If the parent/guardian disagrees with any decision regarding the student's placement or the TEAM's manifestation determination decision, the parent/guardian may request a hearing before the BSEA. In the event that a hearing is requested, except in limited circumstances discussed below, the student may not be removed from the last agreed upon educational setting (i.e., the placement in effect at the time the dispute arose) unless the parties agree upon another placement, or a court permits the school district to change the student's placement, based on a showing that the student's continued presence would present a substantial likelihood of injury to the student or to others.

Functional Behavioral Assessment

In all cases involving a change in placement that occurs as a result of a disciplinary decision, the student's evaluation TEAM must convene to conduct a functional behavioral assessment. The assessment is for the purpose of developing and implementing interventions to assist the student in avoiding the problematic behavior in the future. If a behavioral intervention plan already exists, the TEAM should review and modify the plan, as necessary, to address the student's behavior.

The student is to be returned to the last agreed upon educational setting (i.e., the placement from which s/he was removed), unless the school district and parent/guardian agree upon another placement as part of the behavioral intervention plan, or the student is eligible for automatic removal by the school district due to the type of offense.

Interim Alternative Education Setting

A special education student may be placed in an appropriate interim alternative education setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days, without parental/guardian approval, and without regard to whether the student's conduct is a manifestation of his/her disability, in the following circumstances:

- The student carries or possesses a "weapon," as defined under federal law, to or at school, on school premises or at a school function
- A student knowingly possesses or uses, sells or solicits the sale of an illegal drug and/or a controlled substance in school, on school premises or at a school function
- A student has inflicted serious bodily injury on another person (i.e., bodily injury that involves death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ or mental faculty) while at school, on school premises or at a school function; or
- A hearing officer in the BSEA determines that maintaining the student in his/her current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

While the student is in the IAES, the school district must continue to provide the student with special education services that enable him/her to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress towards meeting the goals set out in the IEP.

As noted above, the student's evaluation TEAM also must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and must provide behavioral intervention services and modifications that are designed to address the student's misconduct so that it does not reoccur. If an assessment already has been conducted and a plan developed, the TEAM must review and modify the plan, as necessary, to address the student's behavior.

At the end of the forty-five (45) school-day placement, the student is to be returned to his/her last agreed upon placement, unless the school district and parent/guardian agree on another placement, or a hearing officer orders another placement.

PROTECTIONS FOR STUDENTS NOT YET ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Under certain circumstances, students who have not been determined to be eligible for special education

services nonetheless may be entitled to the protections described above, if the school had prior knowledge that the student had a disability and was eligible for special education and related services, before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

The school district is deemed to have knowledge that the student is a student with a disability if:

- The parent/guardian has expressed concern in writing to administrative personnel or the student's teacher that the student is in need of special education services
- The parent/guardian has requested an evaluation of the student
- The teacher of the student or other school personnel has expressed specific concerns directly to the Special Education Director or other administrative personnel about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

If a parent/guardian has refused to consent to an evaluation or has refused to accept special education services for the student in the past, or the student has been determined to be ineligible for special education services in the past, then the student is not protected under this category and may be disciplined in the same manner as non-disabled students.

If a parent/guardian requests an evaluation for a student after a decision has been made to suspend (or expel) a student, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the student remains in the educational placement determined by school district.

504 POLICY

Definition of 504 Policy:

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a section of a federal law prohibiting discrimination against an individual or individuals with a disability or impairment by any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School will not knowingly permit discrimination against any person with a disability or impairment being serviced under Section 504 in any of the programs or practices of the school district. The school district has a responsibility to identify, assess, and if the student is determined to be eligible under Section 504, afford access to appropriate education services. If you have any questions regarding Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, please contact the District 504 Coordinator.

Disciplining Students with a 504 Plan

All students are expected to comply with the school district's disciplinary rules, unless the 504 Plan for a student specifically indicates that the student is not expected to comply with such rules, or is expected to comply with modified rules.

A student with a 504 Plan who violates the code of discipline may be suspended for up to ten (10) cumulative school days in a school year, in the same manner as a student in the general education program. "Suspension" is defined as any action that results in the student's removal from his or her academic program including in-school suspension, exclusion from transportation services that prohibits the student from participating in his/her academic program, and placement in an interim alternative educational setting. In cases involving the possession of weapons, drugs or serious bodily injury, a student may be removed immediately.

Manifestation Determination

Whenever a suspension would constitute a change in academic placement for a student, relevant members of the student's 504 Plan Team, as determined by the school district, must convene within ten (10) school days of the date of the behavioral incident and determine whether the student's behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to his/her disability. The process is called a Manifestation Determination. The 504 Plan Team must also consider whether the student's behavior was the direct result of the school district's failure to implement the 504 Plan.

In making this determination, the Team will review the 504 Plan, discipline reports, staff observations, and

any relevant information provided by the parent/guardian. If the answer to either question is “yes”, the student’s behavior is considered to be a manifestation of his/her disability.

If the 504 Plan Team cannot reach consensus on whether a student’s behavior was or was not a manifestation of his or her disability, the assistant director will make the determination and provide the parent with written notice. If the parent disagrees with the findings of the manifestation determination, the parent may request a hearing with the Superintendent of Schools or may request a hearing before the Board of Special Education Appeals at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The 504 Plan Team’s determination should be made available to the Assistant Director, who is considering the student’s suspension, before a disciplinary decision is made. Depending upon the 504 Plan Team’s determination, suspension (or expulsion) may or may not be implemented, as explained below.

Circumstances When Suspension in Excess of Ten (10) Days May Be Imposed

If the 504 Plan Team determines that the behavior is not a manifestation of the student’s disability, the student may be suspended (or expelled), in the same manner and for the same duration as for non-disabled students, in accordance with the procedures set forth in the school district’s disciplinary rules.

Circumstances When Suspension In Excess Of Ten (10) Days May Not Be Imposed

A student may not be suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive days in a school year, or ten (10) cumulative days when a pattern of removal is occurring if the 504 Plan Team determines that the student’s behavior is a manifestation of his/her disability.

In such case, the 504 Plan Team must conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan. If an assessment already has been conducted and a plan developed, the 504 Plan Team must review and modify the plan, as necessary, to address the student’s behavior. Unless the 504 Plan Team decides on a new placement for the student as part of the behavioral intervention plan, or the student is eligible for automatic removal by the school district based on the type of offense, the student must be returned to his/her last academic placement. If the parent/guardian disagrees with any decision regarding the student’s placement or the 504 Plan Team’s Manifestation Determination decision, the parent/guardian may request a hearing before the School Director. In the event that a hearing is requested, the student may not be removed from the last academic setting unless the student’s continued presence would present a substantial likelihood of injury to the student or to others.

Functional Behavioral Assessment

In all cases involving a change in academic placement that occurs as a result of a disciplinary decision, the student’s 504 Plan Team must convene to conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment. The assessment is for the purpose of developing and implementing interventions to assist the student in avoiding the problematic behavior in the future. If a behavioral intervention plan already exists, the 504 Plan Team should review and modify the plan, as necessary, to address the student’s behavior.

The student is to be returned to the last agreed upon educational setting (i.e., the placement from which he/she was removed), unless the school district and parent/guardian agree upon another placement as part of the behavioral intervention plan, or the student is eligible for automatic removal by the school district due to the type of offense.

Interim Alternative Education Setting

A student with a 504 Accommodation Plan may be placed in an appropriate Interim Alternative Education Setting for up to forty-five (45) school days, without parental/guardian approval, and without regard to whether the student’s conduct is a manifestation of his/her disability, in the following circumstances:

- The student carries or possesses a “weapon”, as defined under federal law, to or at school, on school premises or at a school function.
- The student knowingly possesses or uses, sells or solicits the sale of an illegal drug and/or a

controlled substance in school, on school premises or at a school function.

- The student has inflicted serious bodily injury on another person (i.e., bodily injury that involves death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ or mental faculty) while at school, on school premises or at a school function, or it is believed that that maintaining the student in his/her current academic placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

While the student is in the Interim Alternative Education Setting, the school district must continue to provide the student with accommodations that enable him/her to continue to participate in the general education curriculum.

At the end of the forty-five (45) school-day placement, the student may be returned to his/her last academic placement, unless the school district and parent/guardian agree on another placement. If a parent/guardian requests an evaluation for a student after a decision has been made to suspend (or expel) a student, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the student will remain in the educational placement determined by school district.

HONOR CODE



Mystic Valley Regional Charter School

• 770 Salem St. • Malden, MA 02148 • Phone (781) 388-0222 • Fax (781)388-2947 •

Guiding Principles

In keeping with the principals found in our mission statement including the promotion of the fundamental ideals of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, the students of Mystic Valley Regional Charter School hereby agree to abide by the following statement.

Honor Code Pledge

As a Mystic Valley student, I will be honest and respectful; all of my work will be my own; and I accept the responsibility of maintaining the spirit of honorable behavior.

Honor Code Definitions

I will be honest and respectful.

- I will always tell the truth.
- I will take responsibility for my actions.
- I will treat everyone the way I would like to be treated.
- I will have respect for myself.
- I will respect others' property.
- I will exhibit self-control.

All of my work will be my own.

- I will not practice fraud or deceit.
- I will not give or receive assistance in examinations.
- I will not give or receive inappropriate assistance in class work, homework, or any other graded work.
- I will not take unfair advantage of the work or ideas of others.
- I will not plagiarize.

I accept the responsibility of maintaining the spirit of honorable behavior.

- As a Mystic Valley student, I will promote honorable behavior and the spirit of the Honor Code in and out of school.

Honor Code Violations

Honor Code violations may be reported to school staff verbally or in writing.

SCHOOL AND HOME COMPACT

The success of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School's Code of Values depends on the support of each member of the school community. Working together, faculty and staff, parents, and students can promote academic achievement and good character, and ensure the success of students as they grow to mature adulthood.

On behalf of the administration, faculty, and staff of the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, I pledge to fulfill the responsibilities and uphold the expectations outlined in the Code of Values.

Sincerely,

Chris Finn

Chris Finn
Assistant Director, K-8

Alex Dan

Alex Dan
Assistant Director, 9-12

As the parent of _____, I agree
(Student's Printed Name)

- To demonstrate consistent interest in my child's progress at school
- To model the character traits described in the Code of Values
- To support and work with school staff to promote my child's learning
- To support the school's policies, particularly the uniform policy and attendance policy

I have read the Handbook and support the rules and policies outlined within.

(Parent's Signature) Date _____

As a student at Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, I agree to abide by the rules and policies outlined in the Handbook and will strive to make my own behavior reflect the character traits highlighted in the Code of Values and Honor Code.

(Student's Signature) Date _____

Please return your signed compact to your child's teacher. Thank you.

If you need a translated version of this handbook or require oral interpretation, please call 781-388-0222.
Si necesita una versión traducida de este manual, por favor llame a la escuela de su hijo.
Si vous avez besoin d'une version traduite de ce manuel, s'il vous plaît appelez l'école de votre enfant.
Se você precisa de uma versão traduzida deste manual, ligue para a escola do seu filho.
如果您需要這本手冊的翻譯版本，請致電您的孩子的學校。