

Dear Venice Indians,

Welcome to Venice High School! We hope that you will begin this school year with a spirit of cooperation and renewed focus on learning. The faculty and administration are eager to work with you in furthering your education; you must realize that you have some specific responsibilities in this process. Therefore, this handbook has been prepared to help you acquaint yourself with our school's policies, procedures, and practices for the school year.

The information in this document has been derived from legal requirements and sound educational practices. Your preparatory education, safety, and welfare are the staff's utmost concerns. Accordingly, our school will be organized in such a manner to ensure an orderly learning environment so you might achieve a quality education.

Venice High School is your high school, and it is our fervent hope that you will learn to respect its ideals and take pride in calling it your school. By acquainting yourself with this Student Handbook, we trust you will have taken the first step toward this goal. We look forward to working with you during this school year.

Sincerely,

Candace Millington, Principal

ADMINISTRATION

PRINCIPAL	CANDACE MILLINGTON
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	RON DIPILLO
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	MICHAEL JENNINGS
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	WILLIAM MOWRY

GUIDANCE COUNSELORS

BRENDA BARTLETT	BARBARA DELGATO
MICHELE CROSS	GARY SWIKLE

CAREER SERVICES

KIM KINDELL, ROTARY FUTURES PROGRAM
LORI SANDBURG, CAREER ADVISOR

Guidance services are available for every student in the school. Services include assistance with educational planning including goal setting, career and college advisement, educational interpretation, social concerns, or personal issues.

ALMA MATER

Voices hymn thy
Valiant praises,
Hearts thy halls enshrine;
May our loyalty unceasing,
Venice, e'er be thine.

In times of triumph and of
Failure

We shall always be
Ever faithful, Alma Mater,
To thy memory.

SCHOOL FIGHT SONG

Forward Venice,
forward Venice.

Plunge right through
that line.

Run the ball clear
down the field,
for a touchdown sure
each time.

Forward Venice,
Forward Venice.

Let's roll up that score.

Fight you Indians, fight
Fight, fight

We'll win once more.

PHILOSOPHY

These rights apply to all persons – students and staff – and to the entire school day, including to and from school.

1. The right to develop ones own personality (so long as it does not interfere with the rights of others) without disrespectful criticism or pressure from cliques.
2. Freedom from physical abuse and mental abuse such as name calling, intimidation, or harassment.
3. Freedom from being set apart or mocked because of race, religion, physical strength, size, features, friendship groups, age, culture, handicap, financial status, clothing, classroom performance, or any other reason.
4. The right of privacy and freedom from being harassed in the classroom; the right to be treated respectfully.
5. The right to an education, which means that teachers are free to teach and students are free to learn without being interrupted by inconsiderate or unruly students.
6. The right to have personal and school property respected. Our school is a safe place for property as well as people.

ATHLETICS/INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for athletics and interscholastic activities, a student must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 in all courses taken which are required for graduation. A student's eligibility is determined after each semester (not a nine-week grading period).

ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Prior to participating in athletics, the Florida High School Athletic Association requires that a student must provide the following:

1. Preparticipation **Physical** Evaluation (current school year)
2. Parent/Guardian **Release** and Hold Harmless Agreement for High School Athletic Participation (current school year)
3. **Original Birth Certificate**
4. **Training Rules** (current school year)
5. HIPPA Compliant Authorization to Release Medical Information Form
6. Medical Release Form for Out-of-County or Overnight Travel
7. Emergency Medical/Treatment Field Trip Consent Form
8. Standards for Participation in Athletic Activities Form for Current School Year

All of the above must be turned in to the Athletic Office.

ATTENDANCE POLICY (SECONDARY SCHOOL)

Class attendance is imperative to student achievement and success. By state law and School Board policy, students are required to have been in attendance for a minimum of 90% of the classroom instruction for schools on alternative schedules in order for these students to receive high school credits. Students who have accrued more than the allotted amount of unexcused absences will be subject to loss of credit.

*Any student age sixteen or older who accumulates more than 10% of unexcused absences may be subject to withdrawal from school when conferences with the student and parent have failed to correct the situation.

Excused Absence – (1) Documented illness of the student; (2) Documented major illness in the immediate family; (3) Death in the immediate family; (4) Duration of a religious holiday of the specific faith of the student; (5) Special and unique situations approved by the principal.

Unexcused Absence – (1) Inadequate or unacceptable reason for the absence; i.e. car trouble, oversleeping, alarm and power failures are all unexcused (2) Results from school disciplinary action; (3) Truancy.

A student has 3 school days to bring in a note from a parent or guardian regarding an absence. Anything brought in after that time period will be regarded as an unexcused absence. This note should be given to the student's first period teacher.

Make-up Work – a student, who has an excused absence, or an unexcused absence resulting from suspension, shall be expected to make up the work missed. Students on suspension should complete all work upon their return to school. In the case of all other unexcused absences, students will receive a zero grade for all work missed. A student who has received an excused absence must complete all work missed within a time frame equal to the number of days absent.

Passports (Pre-arranged absences for up to 2 days) – In order for a student to obtain a passport, an approved parent note must be submitted to the Attendance Office 48 hours prior to the requested date(s). All passports must be signed by the student's teachers and returned to the Attendance Office before the intended absence.

Independent Study (Pre-arranged absences for 3 to 10 days)
– In order for a student to obtain an Independent Study release, an approved parent note must be submitted to the Attendance Office 48 hours prior to the requested date(s). The Independent Study Form must be signed by the student's teachers, an Assistant Principal, the student and the parent and returned to the Attendance Office prior to the intended absence. This form will be placed in the student's cumulative folder. All academic assignments and requirements are due upon return to school.

Early Dismissals

-All early dismissals are to be obtained from the Attendance Office. The note from the parent should be taken to the Attendance Office before school on the day of the dismissal. The office opens promptly at 7 a.m. Every effort will be made to contact the guardian. The student must sign out when leaving and sign in upon return.

Special Note (Pre-arranged absences for more than 10 days)
– If the student will be out for more than 10 days, the student will be sent to the Guidance Office and withdrawn from school for attendance purposes. The student must report to the Guidance Office for reinstatement upon return to school.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

In keeping with the School Board rule regarding employability skills, attendance will now become part of every student's grade. Twenty percent (20%) of the grade will be based on the development of the following positive work habits: attendance, punctuality, bringing required materials, maintenance of an assignment notebook, completion of homework, appropriate dress for class, attitude of cooperation with staff and students, and time in class devoted to the appropriate task.

These skills will be clearly outlined in a course Fact Sheet developed by the instructor of every course. The Fact Sheet will define teacher expectations and methods of documentation.

BOOK LOCKERS

Book lockers will be available to the students for a \$10.00 usage fee. The locker and lock are the property of the School Board. Use only the locker assigned to you and keep it locked at all times. Do not tamper with another locker or give your combination to another person. Lockers are provided as a service to students, and the school accepts no responsibility for the contents of any locker.

A student's locker or other storage area is subject to search, upon reasonable suspicion, for prohibited or illegally possessed substances or objects.

CAMPUS PRIDE

We are very proud of our campus appearance. The custodians work every day to keep our campus clean and neat. This is an impossible task without the students' help and support. Waste receptacles are located in all areas and everyone should make a special effort to see that these receptacles are used. All trash should be put into these receptacles and not thrown on campus. This is your campus, so be proud of it. Venice High School can only be as clean and neat as you make it.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Each student is responsible for the proper care of all books, supplies and furniture supplied by the school.

A student who vandalizes or does damage to school property or equipment will be required to pay for the damage done or replace the item.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE

The student must inform the Guidance Office if a change of home address or telephone number occurs. Transportation will only bus to the official home address.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

“Sarasota County Public Schools reserves the right to release ‘directory information’ without prior permission of the parent as detailed in the following categories: name, address, telephone number (if it is a listed number), date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance (years of enrollment), degrees and awards received and most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student. Parents objecting to the release of directory information and wishing to exclude their student’s name must notify the school principal in WRITING within thirty (30) days of receipt of this notice.”

EVACUATION DRILLS

Drills at regular intervals are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone obeys orders promptly and clears the building by the prescribed route as quickly as possible. The teacher in each classroom will give instructions to the students.

Specific Rules for Fire Drills

1. Move quickly and quietly
2. Exit according to plan
3. Leave belongings behind
4. Turn off lights and close doors

FIGHTING POLICY

The penalty for being involved in a fight, defined as an exchange of physical blows, (hitting, slapping, pushing, shoving), will be a major out-of-school suspension. Students who do not fight back will not be subject to punishment. Those students should report the incident immediately to an administrator or teacher. Students should not take matters into their own hands but should allow an administrator to handle the situation.

In the event a fight breaks out, students are advised to move away from the area of the disturbance, tend to their own business, and not get in the way of administrators or staff who are trying to deal with the situation.

Students who instigate fights but are not actively involved (that is, students who carry rumors, put others up to fighting, carry information back and forth between other individuals who subsequently fight) submit themselves to the same penalties as those who are involved in the fight. Students who are intimidated or harassed by another student should report all information immediately to a staff member or administrator. Fighting will not be tolerated on this campus, on the school bus, or at a school-sanctioned event.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATION

A student owing monies for library fines, textbooks, etc., must meet his/her obligations when due or make arrangements with an Assistant Principal. Past due obligations will be placed in the student's file. Any student with financial obligations will not be allowed to participate in graduation activities and will not receive their diploma until fines are satisfied.

GRADING SYSTEM

The following marking system has been suggested by the School Board of Sarasota County:

A – 90-100 B – 80-89 C – 70-79 D – 60-69 F – 0-59

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Venice High School is subject to promotion, progression, and graduation policies as mandated by the School Board of Sarasota County and the State of Florida. Specific grade level information is available in the Guidance Office and each student is encouraged to carefully review all requirements for graduation with his/her counselor.

Graduation Requirements 9th and 10th Graders	Credits
English Major concentration in Composition	4
Mathematics Must have Algebra I or its equivalent	4
Science Two must have laboratory components	3
Social Studies World History (1 credit) Economics (.5 credit) American Government (.5 credit)	3
Fine Arts	1
HOPE	1
Electives	10
Total Credits	26

Graduation Requirements 11 and 12th Graders	Credits
English Major concentration in Composition	4
Mathematics Must have Algebra I or its equivalent	3
Science Two must have laboratory components	3
Social Studies World History (1 credit) Economics (.5 credit) American Government (.5 credit)	3
Practical Arts/Performing Fine Arts Practical arts include courses in vocational areas such as business technology, technology studies, family, home and consumer science. Performing fine arts include the areas of music, drama and art.	1
Life Management Skills	.5
Physical Education	.5
Personal Fitness	.5
Electives	11.5
Total Credits	27

HALL PASSES

No student should be outside the classroom during the school day without a proper pass. It is the student's responsibility to have a pass while outside the classroom.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is a regular part of every class. All students are expected to complete all assignments. When absent, homework may be requested through guidance and will be made available the following afternoon. Homework assignments may not be requested for a student on out-of-school suspension. All work may be completed upon the student's return to school in a number of days equal to the number of days of the suspension.

HONOR ROLL

The scholastic honor roll of Venice High School shall be issued by the County Office (Information Services) following the issuance of quarterly grades. Students must take four subjects per term. High honors students must have grade point averages of 3.5 and no letter grade lower than a "C." Highest honors students must have grade point averages of 4.0 and no letter grade lower than a "B."

ILLNESS OR INJURY DURING SCHOOL

Any student too ill to remain in class should report to the school Health Office with a pass. He/she may remain there a short period of time or contact his/her parent for permission to leave school and go home. The Health Office should be notified immediately concerning any injured students. A registered nurse provided by the County Health Dept. is on campus and will counsel any student on health related issues.

INSURANCE (STUDENT)

A group accident insurance policy is available to every member of the student body at a nominal cost. This school insurance is private coverage and not Venice High School insurance. Every student participating in athletics MUST be covered by insurance.

STUDENT AIDE

Seniors who would like to be an aide may fill out a request form. The forms are in Guidance. A senior must have a 3.0 average and have passed the FCAT.

ITEMS NOT ALLOWED ON CAMPUS

Any item, which may cause an interruption to the academic atmosphere or prove to be a safety hazard, will not be allowed on campus. If a student brings such an item to school, it will be taken and returned only after a parent meeting is held with an administrator. Examples of disruptive or unsafe items would be:

1. Radios/tape and disc players
2. Skateboards/roller skates/roller blades
3. Laser pointers
4. Knives/other weapons
5. Electronic communication devices
6. Chains
7. Tobacco products

This list is not intended to be all-inclusive.

* CELL PHONES **MUST** be turned off and not visible while on campus.

LOST AND FOUND

Any student who finds lost articles is asked to take them to the Attendance Office where the owners can claim them.

LUNCH (CLOSED CAMPUS)

Venice High School is operated under a closed campus policy. This means all students must remain on campus during the school day. No one will be allowed off campus for lunch. Each student shall have 30 minutes for lunch. The school cafeteria offers hot meals during the scheduled lunch periods.

MEDIA CENTER

Every student enrolled in Venice High School has the privilege of checking out media materials. Three (3) items (not including textbooks) may be checked out for three weeks and are able to be renewed unless there is a request for the item. Fines are charged for overdue items.

Computers with Internet access and Microsoft Office are available for research purposes and staff is on hand at all times to assist. Students need a Media Pass to enter the Media Center during the instructional day, but are encouraged to utilize the Media Center before school, after school, and during lunch without a pass.

The hours of the VHS Media Center are 6:30 am to 4:00 pm daily. Food and drink are not permitted.

MOTOR VEHICLES AND STUDENT PARKING

Upperclassmen who are interested in parking at Venice High School should be aware of these policies. **PARKING ON CAMPUS IS A PRIVILEGE.** Due to limited space the following regulations will be in effect:

- Parking will be limited to upperclassmen.
- Any vehicle parked on campus must display a valid parking decal at all times.
- Drivers must obey state laws and school policies.
- No students are allowed in the parking lot during the school day without administrative authorization.
- Violations of school parking and/or driving regulations will result in the loss of parking privilege and non-refundable decal.
- Students with outstanding debts to VHS will not be eligible for a parking permit.

PARENT PICK-UP

A student being picked up or dropped off by his/her parents must use the designated pick-up area that is located on the extreme north campus on Milan Street between the elementary school and the high school. Please do not park in the lanes in front of the Administration Building.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports will be issued to students by the end of the fifth week of each nine-week session. This report will indicate the grade to date, absences, behavior, etc. It is the student's responsibility to deliver the progress report to the parent. Parents can check student's progress at any time on SmartWeb.

REGISTRATION

It is very important that you select your courses carefully. **The ONLY schedule changes that will be allowed during the FIRST week of school are the following:**

- Students who have not taken a course pre-requisite
- Students who have missing classes
- Students who did not get required teacher approval of a course
- Course level placement
- Academic overload

If you need any help in selecting your classes for next year, please seek the advice of your guidance counselor. See our website www.sarasota.k12.fl.us/vhs/guidance.

RELEASE OF STUDENT EDUCATIONAL RECORDS

School Board policy prohibits the release of educational records (other than directory information) of a student without written consent of the parent/guardian or student if 18 years of age.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued at the end of each nine-week session. Grading periods will end on October 26, 2009; January 15, 2010; March 24, 2010; and June 4, 2010. Report cards are usually distributed the following week.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The SAC is comprised of members, which include the school principal, teachers, staff, parents, and students. The purpose of the council is to enhance school site decision-making regarding school improvement. Meetings occur the second Monday of each month and are open to the public. All interested parties are invited to attend.

SCHOOL AND THE LAW

FORBIDDEN BY LAW: (State of Florida or School Board Policy)

- *Fraternity or sorority membership
 - *Carrying a knife or any other weapon
 - *Loitering or disturbance at school
 - *Possession of drugs, paraphernalia, or under the influence of drugs at school or a school activity
 - *Possession of, or under the influence of alcohol at school or a school activity
 - *Serious vandalism or theft
- (*The police must be called for these offenses.)

NOTE: It is important that all students and parents understand that certain criminal and/or disruptive behavior must, by School Board Policy and Administrative regulations, be reported to the appropriate police authorities. Any person involved in the use, possession, sale or transmission of controlled substances, paraphernalia, or alcoholic beverages on school premises or at any school sponsored activity, except as prescribed by a licensed physician, will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

SEARCH POLICY

Upon reasonable suspicion of questionable student conduct, a search of any student property, in which illegally possessed items or objects could be concealed or stored, will be conducted. F.S.S. 232.256

SCHOOL DRESS

Venice High School takes pride in the appearance of its students. Your dress reflects the quality of the school, of your conduct and of your schoolwork.

The student, with parents' guidance, should come to school ready to learn and participate in the instructional program. School clothing naturally reflects the ins and outs of the current fashion scene. Venice High School does not want to be placed in the position of ruling on fashion; however, a few basic rules do pertain.

The following TOPS are NOT acceptable:

- **Exposing the belly or midriff**
- **Low cut to expose cleavage**
- **Tube**
- **Spaghetti straps**
- **Torn/ripped**

PANTS, SHORTS, SKIRTS, DRESSES are NOT acceptable that

- **Expose the buttocks (MUST BE mid-thigh length)**
- **Expose undergarments**
- **Ripped/torn**
-

NO SLIPPERS OR PAJAMAS

NO HATS may be worn INSIDE ANY BUILDING

NO CHAINS, SPIKED JEWELRY OR SPIKED BELTS

NOTHING may be worn that encourages or advertises:

- **The use of drugs**
- **The use of alcohol**
- **Gang involvement**
- **Discrimination**
- **Sexual innuendoes**

This list is **not** intended to be all-inclusive. Any student wearing inappropriate clothing should be immediately referred to an administrator. If possible, inappropriate clothing will be changed at school. If no other clothing is available, the student will be sent home. A student who continually wears inappropriate clothing to school is subject to disciplinary action such as suspension from school.

Consequences for violation of dress code will be administratively rendered.

SELECTING THE VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN

The student must attend Venice High School for all four quarters of his/her senior year.

The student with the highest weighted G.P.A. will be selected as the Valedictorian and the second ranking student on the basis of weighted G.P.A. will be appointed as the Salutatorian.

1. G.P.A. will be computed for all final course grades completed in grades 9,10, and 11 and the quarterly grades through the third term of the senior year.
2. Weighted G.P.A. will be computed to the 4th decimal place.
3. In the case of a tie, the highest SAT score will be the determining factor in resolving the tie; the highest aggregate score on the SAT will be declared Valedictorian with second member declared Salutatorian.

SENIORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Check credits with counselor by September 1 of senior year.
2. Get measured for cap and gown (and meet deadline for fee).
3. Make written requests to the Guidance Office for college transcripts (must give 10 school days notice).
4. Fill out resume for guidance counselors and teachers at least two weeks prior for requested letter of recommendation.
5. College applications to selective schools requiring letters of recommendation and secondary school reports must be submitted 10 school days before deadline.
6. It is recommended that all college applications are submitted before Thanksgiving break.
7. Check for possible financial aid in the Rotary Futures Program.
8. Make sure all obligations have been fulfilled.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Complementing this student folder is the Sarasota County Public School Code of Student Conduct, which outlines the rights and responsibilities of the students attending Venice High School. This document will be made available to all students, and they are urged to familiarize themselves with its contents.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Because the main purpose of school is educational, the following statements are to serve as guidelines for acceptable behavior.

1. Students are required to attend all scheduled classes.
2. During lunch periods, students should remain in the cafeteria or designated outdoor eating areas.
3. Students may not sit on the floor in the hallways.
4. Students must have hall passes to be excused from classes to go to other areas.
5. Students are financially responsible for lost/damaged school equipment, supplies, and textbooks.
6. Students must remain on the school grounds at all times. Parking lots are off limits to students during the school day.
7. Students are not permitted to smoke or bring tobacco products to school. Any student found smoking or possessing tobacco products will be suspended and/or fined.
8. Physical education areas are for classroom use only during the school day.
9. Profanity, fighting, littering, running in the halls, throwing objects, defacing school property, name calling, tardiness to class, screaming, yelling, whistling, horseplay, stealing, tampering with fire extinguishers or fire alarms and violence are not permitted.

These are examples of acts that are considered unacceptable behavior and will result in disciplinary action.

STUDENT CONDUCT AT ATHLETIC EVENTS & SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Students are expected to exhibit proper behavior at both home and away events. This includes no fighting, booing or heckling, throwing or dropping of refuse and no loitering in the immediate area before or after an event. School policy prohibiting the use or possession of cigarettes, drugs and alcohol applies at all events in which the school is involved, regardless of the site. Students on out-of-school suspension may not attend any school-related activity.

TARDINESS

Students must report to all classes on time. Students who arrive late to class without an authorized admit are to be counted as “unexcused tardies.” Students tardy to school should report to the Attendance Office before going to class.

TELEPHONES

The school telephones are business phones and may not be used by students.

TOBACCO

In compliance with the Florida State Law, which prohibits the sale of tobacco products to anyone, under 18 years-of-age, smoking or the use of other tobacco products by any student is prohibited on school grounds. Students who disregard this policy will be referred to an administrator for disciplinary action. Students who are found smoking or in possession are subject to monetary fines ranging from \$28 to \$500.

TRANSPORTATION

The State of Florida is a “No Fault” State and injuries sustained by your child while on a school bus are covered under your Personal Injury Protection (PIP) coverage provided by your personal automobile policy. Please make sure you contact your automobile insurance carrier to report all injury claims.

VISITORS

A student is not allowed to bring visitors to school. Visitors are a hardship on both teachers and pupils. Parents are always welcome, and are encouraged to make an appointment for any visitations or conferences. All visitors are subject to any state laws governing the state of Florida.

ROTARY FUTURES PROGRAM

MISSION STATEMENT: To educate, inspire and motivate students of all ages to access post-secondary education and/or training by linking education, career, and life opportunities .

The Rotary Futures Program (RFP) is an innovative approach to post-secondary decision-making that utilizes a resource center with Internet computers, numerous printed materials, and willing volunteers to assist students, parents and community members. Since opening its doors in January 2002, the RFP has been visited more than 33,000 times by VHS students and community members. This comprehensive program provides resources and assists area students with:

- College Planning
- Technical/Vocational school planning
- Community Service Hours
- Resumes and essay writing
- SAT/ACT information and registration
- College/School applications
- Scholarships
- Financial aid resources
- FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
- Florida Bright Futures Scholarships
- Parent seminars

The RFP developed and implemented the first local scholarship database, which now houses over 900 scholarships. The database has been utilized by over 2,700 students. At Awards Night, the Class of 2008 received \$2.1 million in local and institutional scholarships complimented by another 2.3 million in Florida Bright Futures Scholarships.

Located in VHS portable 1405, the RFP is an invaluable and unique resource to the Venice-area community and is open to area students of all ages **Tuesday-Friday**, 7:30 am to 3:30 pm. Part-time hours are kept during the summer. All services are free of charge. For more information, call **480-3178** or visit our website, **www.rotaryfutures.org**

SMALLER LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) is an opportunity for students to be a part of a personalized learning environment made up of small, focused academies. Academies are smaller schools within the larger school, organized around particular themes. Teachers and students integrate academic and occupational-related classes as a way to enhance real-world relevance and maintain high academic standards. Career academies combine key principles of the school to career movement, providing work-based learning opportunities for the students, and preparing students for post-secondary education and employment. Local employer partnerships provide program mentors, externships and senior projects. Career academies share with other restructuring initiatives an emphasis on building relationships between students and adults. The six Academies at Venice High School are: Hospitality, Education and LeadershiP (HELP), Business Information Technology (BIT), Visual Arts Community, Performing Arts Community, Life & Health Sciences, and Science & Engineering.