



Venice High School Student/Family Handbook 2023-34





Dear Venice Indians,

Welcome to Venice High School!

We hope that you will begin this school year with a focus on learning and personal growth. The faculty and administration are eager to work with you in furthering your education.

The Student Handbook is designed to acquaint students with the specifics of the standards expected of them as members of our school community. The policies and regulations delineated in the handbook apply to all students enrolled at Venice High School. The information in this document has been derived from legal requirements and sound educational practices. Your education, safety, and welfare are the staff's primary focus. Accordingly, our school is organized in such a manner to ensure an orderly learning environment so you can achieve a quality education. Our handbook has been prepared to help you acquaint yourself with our school's policies, procedures, and practices for the 2023-24 school year.

During your time here, we encourage you to become effective communicators, problem solvers, and critical thinkers. We want all students to demonstrate integrity and empathy as they work towards graduation. The faculty, administrators and staff are here for you. We encourage you to work with them. We will assist and support you in your coursework, extracurricular, and social emotional growth.

Venice High School is your high school. It is our expectation that you will learn to show respect, responsibility and be safe by adhering to the Student Handbook. We look forward to working with you during the 2023-24 school year.

Sincerely,

*Zoltan Kerestely
Principal
Venice High School*



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YOUR SUPPORT TEAM

Name	Position	Location	Student Last Name
Zoltan Kerestely	Principal	Front Office	
Ryan Shurley	Asst. Principal Curriculum	Front Office	
Dr. Mike Raney	Asst. Principal Administration	Front Office	
Matthew Gruhl	Assistant Principal	1 st Floor	A-L
TBA	Assistant Principal	1 st Floor	
Nicole Wolfe	School Counselor	1 st Floor	A-CL
Nancy Hopper	School Counselor	1 st Floor	CO-G
Angela Alexander	Behavior Specialist	1 st Floor	
Rosemary Schmidt	Assistant Principal	3 rd Floor	M-R
Mike Bartlett	School Counselor	3 rd Floor	H-LE
Brenda Bartlett	School Counselor	3 rd Floor	Li-O and IB
Dr. Danielle Tanaka	Assistant Principal	2 nd Floor	S-Z
Mia Slaton	School Counselor	2 nd Floor	P-SK
Lorie Barton	School Counselor	2 nd Floor	SL-Z
Amanda Keifer	ESE Liaison	3 rd Floor	A-J
Seth Jones	ESE Liaison	2 nd Floor	K-Z

STUDENT AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS

The district publishes a Student and Family Handbook each year to provide families with important information about procedures, behavior, academics and health. The handbook is online in several languages at www.SarasotaCountySchools.net.

After reading the District Student and Family Handbook, use this handbook to assist your student in becoming a productive member of the Venice High School community. Thank you for partnering with us by reading, understanding, and following the procedures in the handbook.

The roles and the responsibilities of the **parents** are to:

- Read and understand the rights and responsibilities in this handbook.
- Maintain current home and work addresses and emergency telephone numbers in the student contact information files, including doctor and hospital preferences.
- Be involved in the education of their children and understand that parents/guardians share the responsibility of their students' actions.
- Inform the school of pending legal matters that may affect their child.
- Maintain communication with school personnel concerning their child's progress and conduct.
- Ensure that their child is in daily attendance and promptly report an absence or tardiness via e-mail, including a copy of a photo I.D., to school within three school days after absence.



- Notify the school of anything that may affect the student's ability to learn, to attend school regularly, or to take part in school activities. Notify the school if they are unable to afford school fees so they can be modified if needed.
- Provide their child with the resources needed to complete class work.
- Assist their child in being healthy, neat, and clean.
- Identify responsible adults who may pick up their child from school.
- Bring to the attention of school authorities any problem or condition which affects their child or other children at the school.
- Understand policies related to the dispensing of medicine to students and the prohibitions against student self-medicating and sharing medications with other students.
- Understand the guidelines for student arrival on campus prior to the official start of the school day and student departure from campus at the end of the school day.
- Comply with transportation policies and understand that bus drivers may not allow students off the bus except at the designated stop, unless permission is granted by a school administrator and the Transportation Department.
- Understand the rights of school officials and law enforcement officers regarding search of student storage spaces and vehicles.
- Report knowledge of dangerous or harassing situations to school personnel.
- Discuss progress reports and work assignments with their child.
- Communicate <https://getfortifyfl.com/> to submit a tip or get the app to anonymously report potential threats, criminal activity, or dangerous activity. You can also contact the district Safety, Security & Emergency Management Department at 941-966-SAFE (7233).
- In case of an emergency, call 911.
- Communicate with teachers about their child's progress, including, but not limited to, e-mails, calls, and meetings. If these communications do not effectively address your child's needs, please contact his or her School Counselor or Administrator.

The roles and responsibilities of the **students** are to:

- Read and understand the rights and responsibilities in the Code of Student Conduct.
- Abide by the rules and regulations of the school and each classroom teacher.
- Attend all classes daily and be punctual in attendance.
- Wear their school I.D. while at school/on-campus.
- Be prepared for class with homework and appropriate work materials.
- Be respectful of all individuals and property.
- Use appropriate language rather than profane or inflammatory statements.
- Behave in a safe and responsible manner.
- Be clean and neat and comply with the school dress code.
- Be responsible for his or her own work.
- Report knowledge of dangerous or harassing situations to school personnel. *See something, say something, do something!*



- Report criminal, dangerous or harassing situations to FortifyFL at www.getfortifyfl.com
- In case of an emergency, call 911.

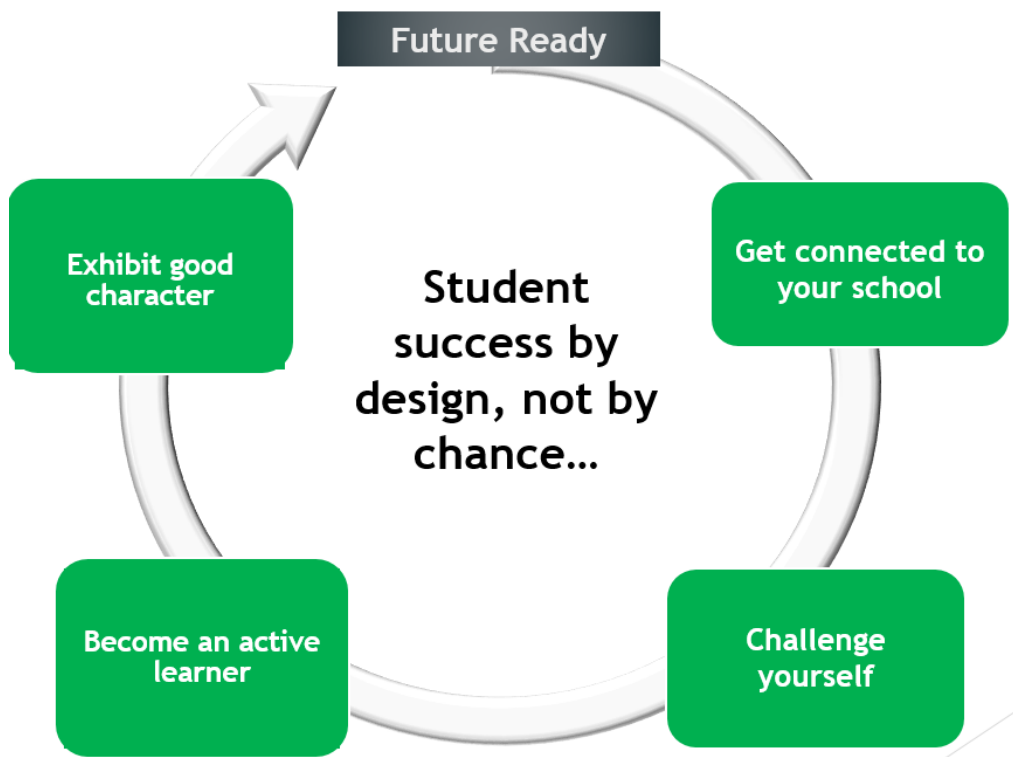
The roles and responsibilities of the **school** are to:

- Create a safe, orderly, and drug-free environment and maintain an atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning.
- Exhibit an attitude of respect for students, staff, parents and visitors.
- Plan a flexible curriculum to meet the needs of all students.
- Promote professional learning for all staff in the areas of high-quality instruction and behavior management.
- Develop a good working relationship among staff and with students.
- Encourage frequent parent/guardian communication with the school.
- Encourage parent/guardian participation in school activities.
- Administer discipline based upon fair and impartial treatment of all students.
- Provide all written and oral communication between school personnel and parents of current or former English-Language Learners in the parents' primary language or other mode of communication commonly used by the parents unless clearly not feasible. Specific Authority 1001.02 FS. Law Implemented 1003.56 FS., as amended by Chapter 2002-387, Laws of Florida. History: New 10-30-90.

Student Responsibilities and Rights

This section summarizes the broad principles of student rights. Each right has a corresponding responsibility in a free and democratic society. A primary responsibility for students is to understand the importance of reporting dangerous, potentially dangerous, or harassing behaviors to school personnel.

- Florida school laws grant principals, assistant principals, teachers, bus drivers, and other school staff the authority to control and discipline students. Students are expected and required to follow the requests and directives of all administrators, teachers, bus drivers, school staff members, coaches, school volunteers and chaperones when on School District property or at other places where they are under the supervision of School District personnel or designees.
- Students have a right to learn through equal educational opportunities that are appropriate to their needs and are provided in a safe, orderly, positive and drug-free environment.
- Students have the responsibility to:
 - Behave in a manner that does not interfere with the learning of other students.
 - Utilize the educational experiences made available to them.
 - Cooperate fully and exert every effort to achieve mastery of basic skills.
 - Behave in a manner consistent with school and district rules and policies.



VHS CAMPUS LIFE

We are very proud of our campus appearance. The custodial staff work every day to keep our campus clean and neat. This is an impossible task without the students' help and support. Waste receptacles are 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. **This is our campus, so we want to keep it clean and neat.** Venice High School can only be as clean and neat as you make it. **No food or drinks are allowed in the classroom buildings – water only.**

DON'T PASS IT UP, PICK IT UP!

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 items.



Lockers

Book lockers will be available to the students for a \$5.00 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. If families are unable to afford fees, please contact the school.

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. If a family cannot afford to pay fees, please contact the school.

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 and after school. The hours of the VHS Media Center are 7:00 am to 2:45 pm daily. Food and drink are not permitted.

Parking (Students)

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.**
- Violations of school parking and/or driving regulations while on campus will result in the loss of parking privilege and non-refundable decal and/or a citation.
- Students with outstanding debts to VHS will not be eligible for a parking permit.
- Students with excessive tardies will forfeit their privilege to have a parking permit.
- For more information visit vhsparking.com

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 in the front area of the campus. Parents are strongly encouraged to use the pick-up and drop-off locations in the front of the Venice Performing Arts Center (VPAC).



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.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Hall Passes

No student should be outside the classroom during the school day without their assigned teacher’s permission and a proper pass. It is the student’s responsibility to have a pass while outside the classroom. Paper passes should be signed and dated by the assigned teacher when a student is sent to any office, the clinic, or another teacher’s class. All electronic devices, including ear buds, should be left in class when a student is out of class on a pass during instructional time. Any student out of class without a pass, or with an electronic device, will be sent back to their assigned class.

Restroom Passes

Students must receive teacher permission to use the restroom. Upon getting teacher permission, they must sign out of the classroom, have the teacher’s official pass, and leave their cell phone in the classroom. Only one student per class may use this pass at a time and students may only use the restrooms assigned to that specific pass.

Emergency 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 orderly. The teacher in each classroom will give instructions to the students.

Critical Incidents at Schools

During a critical incident parents should not go to the school unless notified to do so. The school will be secured by law enforcement and parents will not be able to get their student until the threat has cleared. To ensure student safety and security during an incident, parents are asked to not contact their student by cell phone. Updates and other important information will be provided through the Connect-ED telephone communications system. Parents should make sure all their emergency contact information is current.

Cell Phones during Critical Incidents

During a critical incident at the school, cell phones are not to be used by students. Using a cell phone during an emergency limits the students' ability to quickly acknowledge and respond to directions putting themselves and their classmates in jeopardy. Additionally, during certain emergencies talking is not allowed in the classroom. This rule is enforced so that the room will sound vacant; conversation by the students or the ringing of a cell phone could identify their



location to a perpetrator. Parents are asked to explain to their children the importance of not using cell phones during an emergency.

Illness or Injury During School

Any student who experiences symptoms of sickness should report immediately to the 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.

Prohibited Items 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 are:

- Skateboards/Roller skates/Roller blades (items should be placed in athletic office)
- Laser pointers
- Knives/Chains/Other weapons
- Tobacco products/E-Cigarettes/Vapor devices
- Alcohol/Controlled substances/Drugs
- Lighters/Matches/Paraphernalia
- Bluetooth speakers

This list is not intended to be all-inclusive.

Lost and Found

Any student who finds lost articles is asked to take them to the Main Office where the owners can claim them. Items are kept until June of each school year.

Lunch (Closed Campus)

Venice High School is operated under a closed campus policy. This means all students must remain on campus during their entire schedule. No one will be allowed off campus for lunch. Each student shall have 30 minutes for lunch. The school cafeteria has a designated indoor and outdoor eating area where students are supervised and must remain for the duration of their assigned lunch period. Students not in designated areas during lunch are subject to discipline. Students and parents **MAY NOT** order lunch from outside vendors to be delivered to our school.



Visitors

Visitors will be limited to campus. All visitors are subject to any state laws governing the state of Florida and must provide a driver's license at the front office check in each time. There will be no student shadowing permitted at VHS.

ACADEMICS

GRADING SYSTEM

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.

Homework Policy

See your teacher's website and/or syllabus.

Academic Integrity

The School Board of Sarasota County strongly believes that academic honesty must be practiced by all students.

Definition of Cheating: The inappropriate and deliberate distribution or use of information, notes, materials, work of another person or the unauthorized use of technology devices in the completion of an academic assessment or assignment.

Students are always expected to demonstrate honesty and integrity.

Each student is expected to do his or her own work, except where collaboration is permitted by the teacher. This includes test taking, homework, class assignments and the original creation of essays, compositions, term papers and research.

There is no distinction between giving and receiving unauthorized help; one who helps another to cheat is as guilty as one who benefits from cheating. All work submitted by the student should be a true reflection of that student's own effort and ability.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, academic consequences, the loss of eligibility for local scholarships, and loss of honors, awards, and membership in extra-curricular activities.



Employability Skills

In keeping with the Sarasota County Schools K-12 Student Progression Plan, attendance is part of every student's grade. For each course taken in high school, twenty percent (20%) of the quarter grade shall be based on the development of employability skills. Those skills will include attendance, coming to school or class on time, bringing required work tools, such as paper, pen/pencil, textbooks, notebooks, etc., maintenance of an assignment notebook or similar system, completion of homework, appropriate dress for class, attitude of cooperation with teacher and fellow students, following all safety protocols, and time in class devoted to the appropriate task.

International Baccalaureate Programs

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end, the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. Successful completion of an IB course adds 1.5 quality point to the weighted GPA.

Advanced Placement

The College Board's nationwide Advanced Placement (AP) Program allows eligible high school students to have the opportunity to take college level coursework and earn college credit when they earn a qualifying score on an AP exam. It is recommended that students or their parents contact the specific post-secondary institutions of interest to the students to learn more about the policies awarding college credit for AP courses taken in high school. Fees are charged for the exams if the corresponding course is not taken. AP courses are taken during regular school hours at area high schools or through a virtual program. Successful completion of an A.P. course adds 1.5 quality points to the weighted GPA.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

The goal of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Department of Sarasota County Schools is to provide all students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to make informed and appropriate educational and career decisions. Career and Technical Education provides a variety of opportunities for students at all grade levels:

- High school Career and Technical Education programs offer students industry certification, post-secondary credit, Ready to Work credentials and scholarship opportunities.
- Postsecondary career training programs align to local and regional economic needs.
- The learning environment is up-to-date and representative of the world of work.
- Project-based learning experiences are designed to have clear, concise connections with course content and employer expectations.
- Curriculum is based on rigorous, standards-based academics, and is integrated with workforce and industry standards.



- Opportunities are provided for students to receive Gold Seal Scholarships, dual enrollment in postsecondary programs, community service and work-based learning experiences.
- Internships and on-the-job training experiences are available for students to apply their technical skills in meaningful ways.
- Programs provide opportunities for student certification or licensure in their chosen career pathway.
- Career and Technical programs will increase the number of high school graduates who are both college- and career-ready; increase relevance between academic experiences and real-world opportunities; increase academic rigor through technical content and prepare students for success in the 21st century workplace.
- Agreements with various post-secondary institutions provide students with the opportunity to earn articulated college credit as they complete many career and technical education courses.

Parent Portal for Student Progress

Progress reports will be on the parent portal as well as grades and attendance are available via the parent portal. **Parents are strongly encouraged to regularly check their student's progress on the Parent Portal.**

Schedule Changes

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

1. Students who have not taken a course pre-requisite
2. Students who have missing classes
3. Students who did not get required teacher approval of a course
4. Course level placement, academic acceleration

If you need any help in selecting your classes, please seek the advice of your guidance counselor through e-mail or in their office.

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

Classroom instruction in every subject is based on the district curriculum, which includes the Florida Standards. A teacher's recorded grade of a child's progress is based on progress made toward mastery of these standards. Issued every quarter during the school year, the report card explains the grading system adopted by Sarasota County Schools. Attendance and conduct information are also recorded. Report cards are distributed electronically through the Parent Portal four times per year, after the end of each grading period. These dates will be posted on the district website.

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.

Change of Address or Telephone

The student must inform the Registrar 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.

Financial Obligation

A student owing money for library fines, parking fines, textbooks, etc., must meet his/her obligations when due or make arrangements with an Assistant Principal. Past due obligations may be placed in the student’s file. Any student with financial obligations may not be allowed to participate in graduation activities until fines are satisfied.

Senior Responsibilities

1. Check credits with counselor by October 1 of senior year.
2. Purchase your cap and gown.
3. Make written requests to the Guidance Office for college transcripts (must give 10 school days’ notice).
4. Provide resume to 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 College Resource Center.
8. Make sure all obligations have been fulfilled.

The Rotary Futures College Resource Center

The Rotary Futures College Resource Center is a community-based, non-profit, post-secondary resource center located on the campus of Venice High School. In partnership with VHS, the Sarasota County School District, and supported by the Venice-Nokomis Rotary and many other community groups and individuals, this comprehensive program provides free resources and assists area students with:



- Post-Secondary Planning – technical, community, 4-year colleges
- Community Service Hours
- SAT/ACT information and registration
- College/School applications
- Scholarships
- Financial aid resources
- FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) Assistance
- Florida Bright Futures Scholarships
- Parent seminars

Rotary Futures developed and implemented the first local scholarship database, which houses approximately 500 scholarships. The Class of 2022 received over 11.7 million in accepted private and institutional scholarships complimented by another 1.8 million in Florida Bright Futures Scholarships.

The Rotary Futures College Resource Center is a free and unique resource open to Sarasota County students of all ages. Operating Hours are **Tuesday-Friday from 7:00 am to 3:30 pm**. All visitors should call or email before visiting to avoid unexpected closures due to meetings, presentations, etc. Visit our website, www.rotaryfutures.org. We are on Facebook and Instagram, too! For more information, call **480-3178 or 488-6726**.

ATTENDANCE

Class attendance is imperative to student achievement and success.

Acceptable reasons for an Excused Absence

- Student illness (if documented by parent/guardian or medical doctor).
- Observance of a religious holiday/service by members of student faith.
- Medical appointment with documentation.
- Death or documented major illness in the immediate family.
- Subpoena by law enforcement agency or mandatory court appearance.
- Other absences beyond the control of the parent, as approved by the principal.

Absence Procedure

Absent notes must be emailed to **0221-attendance@sarasotacountyschools.net** within 3 days of the absence. Please make sure the student's full name, date of absence, and reason for absence is included in the email. You may also send in a note to attendance.

*****A doctor's note may be required after excessive absences. Nine in a semester and/or 18 in a school year are excused without a doctor's note.*****



*****Any student who has 15 unexcused absences within a rolling 90-day period is considered to be habitually truant and will be reported by the Superintendent to the Department of Highway and Safety and Motor Vehicles resulting in suspension of a driver's license or permit. The student and parent will also be required to have an attendance meeting with their administrator to review and sign an attendance contract. *****

Early Dismissal Procedure

- All early dismissal notes must be emailed to **0221-attendance@sarasotacountyschools.net** before **9:30 a.m.** the day of the dismissal. The note must include the reason for leaving, dismissal time, date, student's full name, and if the student will be returning to school or leaving for the day.
- Once a student knows their parent has emailed, they can come by the attendance office to obtain an early dismissal pass which will excuse them from class at dismissal time.
- If a student returns to campus that day, he/she will report back to the front window of the attendance office, sign in, and time stamp their early dismissal pass. This will be their pass to return to class.

*****PARENTS*****

**Parents picking up students for early dismissal may remain in their vehicle.
There will be no students dismissed after 1:45 unless previously arranged.**

Tardy Procedure

- First period starts at 7:30 a.m. If a student is late to school and it is during 1st period, they go straight to 1st period. The first period teacher will correct the attendance once they arrive to class.
- All tardy notes should be emailed to **0221-attendance@sarasotacountyschools.net**. Please make sure the student's full name, approximate time of arrival, and date of tardy is included in the email.
- Tardy sign in starts 2nd period. Students will sign in on the pink tardy sheet then write their own pass and time stamp it.

*****Acceptable reasons to excuse a tardy fall under the same rules as excused absences. *****

Tardy Consequences

- Deductions (within that quarter) once the student has 10 consecutive days of on-time arrival.
- After the third tardy to a class on a quarterly basis (in all periods), students will receive teacher-based discipline consequences (such as lunch or afterschool detention).



- Failure to serve detention or additional tardiness to class will result in a discipline referral to administration.

Pre-arranged Multi-Day Absence Procedure

- Students who know they will be absent in the future for more than one day will need a parent/guardian to 0221-attendance@sarasotacountyschools.net. at least 3 days in advance of the absence. The note must include the student's full name, dates of pre-arranged absence, and reason for absence.
- Once approved by the administration, the teachers will be notified, and the absences will be excused.
- Students are responsible to coordinate these assignments missed with their teacher.

*****The student must complete all assignments assigned by the teachers within a reasonable amount of time as set by the teacher. In no case shall the time be less than one full calendar day for each day missed. *****

Driver's License Law

Students who have 15 unexcused absences in a 90-day period will be reported to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV). Monitoring of attendance for driving privileges is done by class periods. Students who hold a Florida driver's license may have their license suspended. Students who have not yet received their driver's license may be unable to obtain one. Application for reinstatement of the driving privilege can be made after the student has attended school for 30 consecutive days with no unexcused absences. There is a hardship appeal process; parents/guardians should check with school administration for information regarding appeals.

**State Law: One Unexcused absence in ONE class period will count as a whole day!
If you have any questions or concerns with your Students Driving privileges, you must speak
with the School's Truancy Officer.**

Make-up Work

A student, who has an excused absence, or an absence resulting from a 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 be afforded an opportunity to make up the work. There may be some academic penalty. A student must complete all work missed within a time frame equal to the number of days absent.



ATHLETICS/INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES

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. Pre-Participation Physical (FHSAA EL2, current school year)
2. Consent and Release from Liability Certificate (FHSAA EL3)
3. Parent/Guardian Release and Hold Harmless Agreement for High School Athletic Participation (notarized)
4. Copy of current Insurance carrier information or copy of insurance card if purchased through www.schoolinsuranceofflorida.com on-line.
5. Affidavit of Compliance with the Policies on Athletic Recruitment and Non-Traditional Student Participation. (FHSAA GA4, notarized)
6. Acknowledgement of Standards for Participation in Athletic Activities
7. Authorization to Release Medical Information for Athletics
8. Emergency Medical/Treatment Field Trip Consent Form
9. Release for Out-of-County or Overnight Travel for Athletics and Field Trips (notarized)
10. A complete packet can be obtained in the Athletic Office or printed under Athletics and Schedules on our VHS website. All of the above must be turned in to the Athletic Office.

TECHNOLOGY USE

Technology and electronic devices are an integral part of a student's educational experience and must be used in a way that is consistent with the goals of Sarasota County Schools' acceptable use policy and Social Media guidelines and consistent with state and federal law, regardless of who owns the device or technology. Technology includes, but is not limited to computers, smartphone, smart devices, other electronic devices, software, e-mail, the Internet, other network resources, cell phones and cameras. Student use of technology is a privilege; students are responsible for using technology appropriately. This includes the use of school district equipment away from school grounds.

The following are inappropriate and/or illegal uses of technology:

- Transmission of any material in violation of federal, state, or local law, or School Board policy, regulation, or Code of Student Conduct while using a School Board-owned device or technology, during school, while on school property or vehicles, while using School Board networks, or during school-sponsored activities. This includes, but is not limited to copyrighted material; threatening, obscene, or pornographic material; vandalizing data, test questions and/or answers; student work products; trade secrets; and computer viruses, "worms" or "trojans."



- Accessing social media platforms through the use of internet access provided by the school district, except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes, per HB 379.
- Using the TikTok platform or any successor platform on district-owned devices, through internet provided by the school district, or as a platform to communicate or promote any district school sponsored club, extracurricular organization, or athletic team, per HB 379.
- Utilizing technology for commercial activities while using a School Board-owned device or technology, during school, while on school property or vehicles, while using School Board networks, or during school-sponsored activities, unless explicitly permitted by the School Board or its designee.
- Downloading and/or printing music, games, images, words, videos or inappropriate files or content while using a School Board-owned device or technology, during school, while on school property or vehicles, while using School Board networks, or during school-sponsored activities.
- Modifying the original pre-set software or hardware on any School Board-owned technology or device, including, but not limited to: loading software applications not authorized by the school board; changing the computer name; changing or removing operating system and extensions; altering security/filtering software; altering the pre-loaded operating system or application; or taking apart the computer for access to internal parts, accessing or altering password.
- Using applications (apps) including video conferencing, social media, chats, e-mail, instant messaging, web pages, or other technology or communication operations in a manner that materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or the invasion of the rights of others.
- Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to the School Board's network, computer servers, or data files.
- Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to non-School Board networks, computer servers, or data files utilizing School Board-owned equipment.
- Using profanity, obscenity, discussing drugs, or using other languages which may be offensive to another user, or reposting and copying personal communications without the author's prior consent, while using a School Board-owned device or technology, during school, while on school property or vehicles, while using School Board networks, or during school-sponsored activities.
- Attempting to log on to the district's network using another person's identity.
- Bypassing or attempting to bypass the district's filtering software, including the use of proxies or VPNs.
- Using computers, networks, and online telecommunication systems in a manner that materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or the invasion of rights of others, including



but not limited to engaging in plagiarism, reproduction of state- or teacher-made tests, textbooks, teaching materials, non-authored text, cheating and theft of ideas.

- Accessing, posting, or recording distributing offensive, threatening, bullying, harassing, obscene, inflammatory, or pornographic material while using a School Board-owned device or technology, during school, while on school property or vehicles, while using School Board networks, during school-sponsored activities, or while off-campus in a manner that materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or the invasion of rights of others.
- Using network access to destroy information that belongs to others.
- Copying software or other copyright-protected materials in violation of copyright laws.
- Using the School Board network, technology, or devices for any illegal activity or private business purposes or accessing inappropriate Internet sites including social media applications (apps).
- “Hacking” into the school’s computer systems or unauthorized modification of computer settings. These acts will be considered vandalism and disruption of a school function and will be treated as such.
- Using technology to threaten, harass or bully other students or staff while using a School Board-owned device or technology, during school, while on school property or vehicles, while using School Board networks, during school-sponsored activities, or while off- campus in a manner that materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or the invasion of rights of others.
- Using a School Board computer, applications (apps), tablets, electronic devices, video, camera, technology, network, or program in any manner other than for appropriate educational purposes, without explicit authorization.
- Students should have no expectation of privacy either when using school district computer equipment or network services as activities, files, and transmissions are being logged and monitored as appropriate.

Violations will result in serious disciplinary actions, which may include an arrest if any criminal law is broken. Examples of such violations would be computer hacking or trespass, harassment, or threats via computer or computer fraud.

SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT (PBIS)

VHS aims to proactively teach, support, and recognize schoolwide behaviors aligned with Safety, Respect, and Responsibility. These expectations are explicitly taught for each part of campus;



classrooms, hallways, restrooms, the cafeteria, the parking lot and the bus loop. By teaching these behaviors, VHS aims to reduce the number of incidents resulting in student referrals and increase instructional time for all students. We recognize students who model these behaviors with IMPACT cards, which they can turn in each week to earn prizes.



STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT/ DISCIPLINE

It is essential that schools be safe and orderly to provide environments that foster learning and high academic achievement. The District shall strive to protect students, staff, visitors and volunteers from harm and to protect victims of crime from further victimization. This policy applies to conduct on School District property, school or District provided transportation and at any school or District sponsored activity. This policy implements the zero-tolerance policy as outlined in Florida Statutes.

Bullying, Harassment and Student Dating Violence & Abuse

Bullying is defined by SESIR Reporting guidelines: Systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more student or employees. Bullying includes instances of cyberbullying as defined in Section 1006.147(3)(b), F.S. Bulling may include, but is not limited to, respective instances of teasing, social exclusion, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, theft, harassment, public or private humiliation, or destruction of property. If the physical harm or psychological distress is not the result of systematic or chronic behavior, evaluate for Harassment. SESIR bullying must include at least 3 elements: It must be 1) repeated; 2) intentional; and 3) involve a power imbalance. **Harassment** means any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct that places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to the person or damage to the property; has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school including any course of conduct directed at a specific person that causes substantial emotional distress in such a person and serves no legitimate purpose. Harassment involves one-time insulting behaviors.

Bullying and harassment also encompass retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment in good faith. Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation. Perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying or harassment by an individual or group with the intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by incitement or coercion; accessing or knowingly



and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the District school system; or acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment. The regulation of bullying and harassment shall be consistent with state and federal law. Online conduct or speech the District that materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others is prohibited.

Cyberstalking as defined in F.S. §784.048 (1) (d) means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

“Cyberstalk” means:

1. To engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, directly or indirectly, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at or pertaining to a specific person; or
2. To access, or attempt to access the online accounts of Internet-connected home electronic systems of another person without that person’s permission, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment, as defined herein, is prohibited. The District upholds that bullying or harassment of any student or school employee is prohibited as follows:

- during any education program or activity conducted by a public K-12 educational institution;
- during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity;
- on a school bus or other transportation of or provided by a public K-12 educational institution; or
- through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of a public K-12 educational institution.

In any other context permitted by state and federal law or when it involves speech or conduct that materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others. Incidents of bullying or harassment shall be reported to the school’s administration as per School Board Policies 2.70, 2.71, 2.71a. The principal or designee will investigate all reports of bullying that have been deemed a violation of the policy pursuant to the steps outlined in School Board Policy 2.70, 2.71, 2.71a.

A maximum of ten (10) school days shall be the limit from the initial filing of incidents to the completion of the investigative procedural steps. The highest level of confidentiality possible will be upheld regarding the submission of a complaint or a report of bullying and/or harassment and the investigative procedures that follow. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. The Sarasota School District Bullying and Harassment School Board Policy 2.70 will be publicized at the beginning of each school year for staff, parents and students.



300.6 a Sexual Assault, Sexual Battery and Sexual Offenses (Other)

Note: Definitions within this section reflect Florida Department of Education SESIR reporting guidelines (SESIR.org) as well governing Florida State Statutes.

Sexual Assault is defined by SESIR Reporting guidelines and as contemplated by Chapter 784, Florida Statutes. This term includes any incident that includes threatened rape, fondling, indecent liberties, or child molestation. Both males and females can be victims of sexual assault. The threat must include all the following elements: 1) intent; 2) fear; and 3) capability.

Sexual Battery as defined by SESIR Reporting guidelines and contemplated by Chapter 794, Florida Statutes, is forced or attempted oral, anal, or vaginal penetration by using a sexual organ or an object simulating a sexual organ, or the anal or vaginal penetration of another by any body part or object. Both males and females can be victim of sexual battery.

Examples:

- Student or other raping someone.
- Student or other attempting to rape someone.

Non-Examples:

- Students engaging in consensual sex acts. (Consensual sex is not Sexual Battery. Refer to Sexual Offenses (Other) as a possible SESIR code).
- Student or other threatening to rape someone. (Refer to Sexual Assault as a possible SESIR code.)

Note: This is a "Violent Incident" and must be reported in the related element "Injury-Related." and must also be "Reported to Law Enforcement."

Sexual Harassment Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, such as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical graphic and written statements, and may include statements made through computers, cellphones, and other devices connected to the internet. The conduct can be carried out by school employees, other students, and non-employee third parties.

Sexual Offenses (Other) as defined by SESIR Reporting guidelines and as contemplated by Chapters 794, 796, 800, and 827, Florida Statutes, including other sexual contact, including intercourse, without force or threat of force. Subjecting an individual to lewd sexual gestures or comments or sexual activity or exposing private body parts in a lewd manner.

Examples

- Student or other participating in sexual activity in front of a student.
- Student or other intentionally exposing genitals.
- Two or more students engaging in sexual activity.
- Student or other soliciting or encouraging a person to commit a sexual act.



- Student or other touching the buttocks of another in a lewd, lascivious manner.

Non-Examples

- Students kissing consensually.
- Student swearing.
- A kindergarten child relieving himself publicly.
- A first-grade student hugging another.
- Student inadvertently touching breasts or buttocks of another.
- Inappropriate or suggestive gestures.

In accordance with F.S. § 1002.40, the following reported incidents: Battery, Harassment, Robbery, Hazing, Bullying, Kidnapping, Physical Attack, Sexual Offenses, Assault, Battery, Threat or Intimidation, and Fighting are eligible for HOPE Scholarship Notification. For more information about HOPE Scholarship, please visit: [FLDOE.org/HOPE Scholarship](http://FLDOE.org/HOPE_Scholarship) or speak with your student's school administrator.

300.7 — **Gangs**

It is essential that schools be safe and orderly to provide environments that foster learning and high academic achievement. In order to promote an orderly learning environment in our schools while preparing students for later success in the world of work, the School Board of Sarasota County has taken a proactive approach and has established procedural guidelines concerning youth gang activity. These guidelines are to address problems associated with youth gangs through proactive education and disciplinary action, when necessary. Any student who is associated with a gang and/or participates in gang activity as outlined by this policy is subject to immediate disciplinary action. This includes, but is not limited to, gang dress, gang symbols/signs and gang tattoos. If a parent is concerned about a student's possible involvement in gang activity, he or she should contact a school counselor, school administrator or School Resource Officer.

300.8 — **Discrimination Students have a RIGHT to:**

- Attend school in an environment where all students and adults are treated equally, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
- Attend school in an environment free from discrimination, hostility, bullying and/or harassment, including sexual harassment or when based on another protected classification.

Students have a **RESPONSIBILITY** to:

- Treat others fairly and with respect.
- Conduct themselves and their activities in such a manner that they treat others equally on account of race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, age, disability, veteran or military status, marital status, pregnancy, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by federal or state law or School Board policy.
- Report occurrences of discrimination, harassment, bullying, hostility, or retaliation based on membership in a protected classification as described above, to appropriate school personnel.



- Please refer to the Human Resources web page for more information regarding the reporting of discrimination or harassment at: <https://www.sarasotacountyschools.net/EQUITY>

300.9 - Discipline Policies and Procedures

Violations of the Code of Student Conduct occur in varying degrees of severity. These behaviors are aligned with the district's discipline policy, from least severe (Level 1) to most severe (Level 4). The range of consequences for offenses appears in the Behaviors and Consequences chart following this section. Please note that all SESIR incidents will be reported on an Event and Discipline Report.

LEVEL ONE

Attendance Incidents Tardiness, habitual Truancy/unexplained absence

Leaving school grounds without permission

Rules Violations Incidents

Dress code violation Public display of affection Cheating

Failure to comply with class/school rules Disobeying rules on the school bus Disruptive Incidents

Disruptive behavior Disrespectful language Confrontation Lying/misrepresentation Articles

disruptive to the school Prohibited items,

non-criminal, and unauthorized use of medication Unauthorized sale/distribution of materials

Inappropriate activity

LEVEL TWO

Disruptive/Physical/Verbal Incidents Bus disruption Disobedience/insubordination

Profane/obscene language

Non-criminal threat

Physical aggression (not involving law enforcement) Repetitive disruptive behaviors

Repetitive disobedience/open defiance Insubordination

Property Incidents

Abuse of school property/minor vandalism Petty theft (under \$750)

Rules Violations and Other Serious Incidents

Unserved detention (regular)

Unserved detention (extended/multiple) Unserved detention (Saturday) Firecracker/poppers

Forgery of a document or signature Gambling

Severe/repetitive inappropriate activity Menacing statements, non-criminal Public nudity

Local law enforcement authorities shall be notified when any crime or delinquent act is committed on school property or school-sponsored transportation, or during a school-sponsored activity.

LEVEL THREE

All Level Three offenses will result in out-of-school suspension and possible recommendation for expulsion.

Alcohol (SESIR) Bullying Bullying/Harassment Fighting



Hazing
Sexual Harassment
Threat Intimidation
Dangerous Prohibited Items

Property Incidents
Larceny/Theft more than \$750
Vandalism more than \$1,000 (includes materials/labor) Computer misuse
Reckless vehicle use

Counterfeit/misrepresented documents
Drug Incidents Tobacco/Nicotine Disruption on Campus Trespassing
Sexual offense (Other) Felony suspension act Other Major incidents

LEVEL FOUR

Minimum mandatory punishment for Level Four offenses: out-of-school suspension and recommendation for expulsion.

Possession, use, sale, intent to sell, or distribution of drugs, imitation drugs represented as drugs or prescription medications

Possession, use, manufacture, sale, storage, or distribution of alcohol or intoxicating beverages

Battery Aggravated

Breaking and Entering/Burglary Arson

Armed robbery/Robbery

Battery or aggravated battery on a school district employee Kidnapping or abduction

Homicide Physical Attack

Sexual Assault/Battery Weapons Possession

*There is a mandatory minimum punishment of one (1) full year (365 days) of a disciplinary consequence for zero-tolerance offenses.

School Environment Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR) is outlined in the Florida Statute 6A-1.0017. Sarasota County School administrators, resource officers, threat assessment teams, and staff are trained on reporting procedures and will remain in compliance with state statute. Discipline and school-based interventions are at the discretion of school administrators.

300.10 — Zero Tolerance

F.S. §1006.13 mandates that, “Each school district shall adopt a policy of zero tolerance that defines criteria for reporting to a law enforcement agency any act that occurs whenever or wherever students are within the jurisdiction of the district school board; defines acts that pose a serious threat to school safety; defines petty acts of misconduct; minimizes the victimization of students, staff, or volunteers, including taking all steps necessary to protect the victim of any violent crime from further victimization; establishes a procedure that provides each student with the opportunity for a review of the disciplinary action imposed pursuant to s. 1006.07.” F.S. §1006.07. Any student who is determined to have brought a firearm or weapon, as defined



in Chapter 790, Florida Statutes to school, to any school function, or onto any school-sponsored transportation, or to have possessed a firearm at school, will be expelled, with or without continuing educational services, from the student's regular school for a period of not less than 1 full year and referred to mental health services identified by the school district pursuant to F.S. §1012.584 (4) and the criminal justice or juvenile justice system. Also, refer to School Board Policy 5.32. Please review this policy carefully for a list of offenses that, in the absence

Possession of Weapons and Other Prohibited Articles for additional information.

Any student who is determined to have made a threat or false report, as defined by F.S. §790.162 and F.S. §790.163, respectively, involving school or school personnel's property, school transportation, or a school-sponsored activity will be expelled, with or without continuing educational services, from the student's regular school for a period of not less than 1 full year and referred for criminal prosecution and mental health services identified by the school district pursuant to F.S. §1012.584 (4) for evaluation or treatment, when appropriate.

In complying with the law, the School Board of Sarasota County has enacted School Board Policy 5.32. Please review this policy carefully for a list of offenses that, in the absence of mitigating circumstances, will cause the student to be brought before the Board for expulsion. All students are expected to follow the rules of this Handbook and Code of Student Conduct on their way to and from school. The principal or designee may take administrative action if students' misconduct in route to or from school has a harmful effect on the health, safety or welfare of themselves, other students and/or the school.

300.11 – Behaviors and Consequences Chart

All possible behaviors/actions have not been included on this chart, and the omission of any behavior or action from this chart does not preclude the school administration from taking appropriate action to resolve any situation. A school administrator may develop additional consequences for a particular behavior as long as these consequences do not violate school board policies or state statutes. The following behaviors and consequences framework were developed in accordance with SESIR reporting requirements.

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

- Shaded areas represent the level of possible consequences for each behavior. Consequences are at the discretion of the school administrators.
- All possible behaviors/actions have not been included on this chart, and the omission of any behavior or action from this chart does not preclude the school administration from taking appropriate action to resolve an situation.
- Based on the nature of the incident(s), students may be referred for a threat assessment.
- Based on the nature of the incident(s), students may be referred to a mental health assessment.
- Based on the outcome, students may be referred to SWST, CARE, and/or additional school-based or community services.



See Behavior and Consequences Chart in Section 300.9 Behavior and Consequences Code of Conduct

300.12 — **Prohibition of Weapons**

No student, while on school property, school transportation, or in attendance at a school-sponsored function, shall be in the possession of any article prohibited by law or rules of the district/school, or any article which could reasonably be considered as a weapon. Any student who brings a weapon may be expelled from the regular school for not less than one year and referred to law enforcement or the juvenile justice system for criminal prosecution.

Violations include any firearm, explosive device, or other weapons as defined by Chapter 790, Florida Statutes the possession, sale, distribution, display, transfer or use of any firearm, explosive device, or other weapons, whether operable or inoperable, loaded or unloaded.

Examples include, but are not limited to, the following: guns, BB pistols, firecrackers, bullets, facsimile guns, smoke bombs or shock devices. Violations also include the possession of any object or material deliberately used to damage property, intended for use or that may be used to inflict harm or intimidate any person. This includes the possession of a knife of any size or length, a box cutter or any other sharp object, mace, pepper spray or any aerosol chemical propellant.

Weapons Possession as defined by SESIR Reporting guidelines and as contemplated by Section 790.001(6) and (13), Florida Statutes, Possession of a firearm or any instrument or object defined by that section of F.S., that can inflict serious harm on another person or that can place a person in reasonable fear of serious harm.

Examples

- Student or other possessing a firearm or knife.
- Student or other wielding a knife, pocketknife, or other sharp or pointed implement as a weapon.

Non-Examples

- Student, after investigation, found to possess a common pocketknife or eating utensil with no intent to harm.
- Student possessing items not covered under law or district policy such as pointed instruments, pens, or pencils.

300.13 — **Prohibition of Drugs**

No student, while on school property or school transportation, or in attendance at a school-sponsored function, shall possess, use, store, sell, distribute or be under the influence of any substance defined as a controlled substance under state or federal law, regardless of whether prescribed or authorized. These include, but are not limited to, marijuana, hallucinogens, inhalants, or any substance which requires a physician's



prescription or authorization, or any substance, synthetic or otherwise, designed to create a sense of euphoria or intoxication, or any substance represented by or that mimics or imitates an illegal or controlled substance, such as “designer drugs.” No student, while on school property, school transportation, or in attendance at a school-sponsored function, shall possess, use, store, sell or distribute any equipment or device for the purpose of preparing, measuring, or using controlled substances, designer drugs”, or other unauthorized or drugs. These include, but are not limited to, items listed in F.S. §499.005, and items that may be determined to be drug paraphernalia or electronic cigarettes under the criteria set out in Florida Statutes and/or school/ School Board Policy 5.322.

SESIR defines drug use as the use or possession of any drug, narcotic, controlled substance, or any substance when used for chemical intoxication. Use means the person is caught in the act of using, admits to use or is discovered to have used in the course of an investigation.

Examples

- Student or other possession or being under the influence of illegal drugs at school, at school-sponsored events, or on school transportation.
- Student passing a marijuana cigarette around in the bathroom.
- Student giving prescription drugs prescribed for someone else to another.
- Student selling cocaine to another.

Non-Examples (student may still be subject to disciplinary action)

- Students taking medication prescribed for themselves.
- Student giving an aspirin or other over-the-counter medication to another in dosage prescribed.
- Student using inhalers for asthmatic condition.

300.14 — **Disciplinary Actions**

In order to maintain safe and effective learning conditions, it may be necessary to impose disciplinary consequences for behaviors that disrupt the learning environment or pose a danger to students or school personnel. The following briefly describes the disciplinary actions recognized by the school district and the school board.

300.15 — **Student Detention, Search, and Seizure**

An instructional or administrative staff member is authorized to temporarily detain a student when there is reasonable suspicion that the student has violated a school board policy. This authority permits appropriate search procedures by administrative staff or designees, including searches of vehicles parked on school campuses, and supervised canine searches of student lockers, vehicles, purses, shoes, socks, pockets, backpacks, or other storage areas, the use of metal detectors and the seizure of suspect items. See School Board Policy 5.31



300.16 — **Removal from Class**

If a student causes a disruption to the educational environment, the student may be removed from the classroom.

300.17 — **In-School Restriction** (Alternative Education Environment)

This program provides for on-campus restriction in lieu of out-of-school suspension at the discretion of the administrator. However, due to problems of supervision or lack of facilities at some schools, in-school restrictions may not be offered at all schools. Appropriate behavior and attention to schoolwork are essential for this option to be available.

300.18 — **Restriction of Privileges**

Any student involved in a violation of the Code of Student Conduct may have the student's privileges restricted. The student may be denied participation in extracurricular activities. The student may be assigned to report frequently to a specified staff member who will assist in monitoring the adjustment to specific situations pertaining to the school and the student during this probationary period.

300.19 — **School Bus Suspension**

The privilege of riding the bus may be denied. In such cases, transportation shall be provided by the parent or guardian.

300.20 — **Due Process for Suspension and Expulsion**

When disciplinary actions reach the level of suspension or expulsion of a student, the following procedural steps are implemented to protect the interests of the student. The principal or designee will use and follow the steps in the Due Process Checklist, including identifying whether a student is receiving Exceptional Student Education, 504 plan, or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services. Prior to suspension, a recommendation for expulsion or administrative assignment to an alternative school program, the student shall be provided due process and have the right to:

- Be advised of the charges/accusations.
- Be provided an opportunity to respond to the charges.
- Be provided an opportunity to submit to the administrator a list of names of other individuals who might have witnessed the incident.
- Be advised why they are being suspended or recommended for expulsion.

During a period of suspension that constitutes a change of placement and/or expulsion, students with disabilities are afforded the right to receive educational services that allow the student to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and appropriately advance toward achieving the goals in the student's IEP. Florida Rule: 6A-6.03312, FAC-Discipline Procedures for Students with Disabilities.



300.20a — **Suspension**

When suspension from school is being considered for a student, certain procedures are required by law. A school principal or designee may suspend a student from school for up to 10 (ten) school days per incident for persistent disobedience and/or gross misconduct. The principal or designee takes this action when he or she has exhausted other disciplinary strategies or when alternatives have at least been considered but have been rejected as inappropriate in a given situation. Conferences to resolve the problem are scheduled with the parent/guardian, student and appropriate administrator.

As a result of Florida Statute 1006.09, when a suspension is implemented, the parent/guardian will be informed, through written notification, that he or she has a right to a hearing with the principal. The principal's decision to suspend a student is final. Any student may appeal an alleged failure to provide due process to the superintendent or designee. Students will be remanded to the custody of their parent/guardian with specific coursework assignments to be completed. This disciplinary action excludes a student from entering or remaining on any school campus for any purpose, and he or she is restricted from participation in school-related functions. This includes all athletic and extracurricular activities on any Sarasota County School District campus.

For students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP)/504 plan, federal law requires that IEP/504 plan teams conduct a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) when a student's accumulated suspensions reach 10 (ten) days within a school year, or a change of placement is recommended due to disciplinary infraction. At the MDR, the IEP/504 plan team must determine whether the student's misconduct was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child's disability, or if the misbehavior was the result of the LEA's failure to implement the IEP. If it is determined that the misconduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will return to the student's current placement and staff will convene a meeting to review and revise the Behavior Intervention Plan, if applicable, or to obtain consent for evaluation of a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA). Consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) behaviors related to drugs, weapons, or serious bodily injury may result in immediate removal to an Alternative Educational Setting.

A behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) is an outcome of a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and is an important component of a student's education program specifically created to address behaviors that interfere with the child's learning or that of others and are inconsistent with the district's Code of Conduct. The goal of a BIP is to prevent the student from engaging in undesired behaviors while increasing the use of desired behaviors. The BIP is part of the IEP process, all individuals working with students who have a BIP must always implement it with fidelity. Administrators overseeing discipline should review the implementation of the BIP prior to making disciplinary decisions. Should a student with a BIP continue to engage in behaviors of concern that are inconsistent with the Code of Conduct the IEP team will reconvene to review and adjust the BIP accordingly.

300.20b — **Expulsion**



If a student expelled in another district seeks to enroll, the student may be admitted by the district school board, with or without the recommendation of the district school superintendent, and the student may be placed in an appropriate educational program and referred to mental health services identified by the school district pursuant to F.S. §1012.584 (4) when appropriate, at the direction of the district school board.

A school principal may request that the superintendent recommends to the school board that a student be expelled. This is the most serious disciplinary step available. It denies the student attendance in any and all programs of Sarasota County Schools. An expulsion may be recommended for the remainder of the academic year, the summer session and one additional academic year.

For students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP)/504 plan, federal law requires that IEP/504 plan teams conduct a Manifestation Determination Review for all students who have committed expellable offenses. At the MDR, the IEP/504 plan team must determine whether the student's misconduct was caused by the student's disabilities. If it is determined that the misconduct was caused by the student's disabilities, the student would return to the student's current placement and a Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention Plan is to be amended or created.

Florida Rule: 6A-6.03312, FAC-Discipline Procedures for Students with Disabilities.

Students assigned to second chance schools must be evaluated by the district school board's child study team before placement in a second chance school. The study team shall ensure that students are not eligible for placement in a program for emotionally disturbed children.

For ESE students only, an IEP Team would convene to determine any possible changes for the student, including a possible placement change. If it is determined that the conduct was not caused by the student's disabilities, the student could be considered for a recommendation for expulsion with services.

If grounds for expulsion exist, the superintendent or designee will notify the student and parents in writing of the charges against the student in a language the student and parents can understand. On the day a student with a disability (IEP/504 plan) is recommended for expulsion, the administrator must contact and provide to parent Notice of Procedural Safeguards. The parent or guardian will also receive the notice of suspension and Settlement Agreement which will include the following information:

- Notice of the extended suspension period
- Notice of the student's right to a hearing pursuant to F.S. §120.569 and F.S. §120.57
- A brief statement of the accusation against the student
- Grounds for the expulsion
- The student's and parent's/legal guardian's procedural rights in connection with the hearing, including the right to counsel or other representation should they request a hearing
- Period of expulsion



- Notice of the consequences of failure to request or attend the hearing, which constitutes a waiver of further rights in the matter

The notification may also include a proposed Settlement Agreement.

300.20c — **Settlement and Second Chance Agreement**

The principal or designee should offer to meet with the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to discuss a possible Second Chance Agreement or Settlement Agreement prior to proceeding through the formal hearing. A Second Chance Agreement is an agreement that may be offered to students who have committed an expellable offense pursuant to the Code of Student Conduct.

The Second Chance Agreement is a disciplinary program that allows the student to remain on the regular school campus with specific conditions which may, in appropriate circumstances, include a safety plan. One or more of the following factors can be considered in granting a Second Chance Agreement:

- The act committed was not premeditated nor was there malicious intent
- The student has no previous similar referrals
- The student does not have a significant history of insubordination/misbehavior
- Academically the student has a 2.0 grade point average or better
- The student has good attendance; no more than three unexcused absences

A Settlement Agreement is an agreement that may be offered to students who have committed an expellable offense pursuant to the Code of Student Conduct (School Board Policy 5.34). The Settlement Agreement allows the student to attend an alternative placement to continue their education in lieu of being expelled from the Sarasota County School District upon the student's agreement to comply with strict behavioral, attendance, and other conditions enumerated in the Settlement Agreement.

300.20 d — **Formal Expulsion Hearing** (formally requested by parent or guardian through the district discipline office)

The hearing will be held before a hearing officer appointed by the district. The hearing will be held as soon as possible after written notification of charges to the parent. The parent/legal guardian and principal will be notified of the time and date of the hearing.

- Expulsion hearings are governed by Florida Statute 120.569. Although the school district is exempt from Florida Statute 286.011, which requires reasonable notice of a hearing, the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must be given notice of the provisions of Florida Statute 286.011 Fla. Stat. and may elect to have the hearing held in compliance with that statute. Testimony will be presented under oath. Hearsay is admissible, although it may not be the sole basis for the recommendation. The student may be represented by counsel and will be afforded the opportunity to cross-examine witnesses supporting the charge, to call witnesses on the student's behalf and to introduce evidence. A sufficient record of the proceedings will be kept so a transcript can be prepared in the event either party requests one.



- The hearing officer will issue a recommended order within seven (7) days following the hearing. The Sarasota County School Board will consider the recommendation and exemptions, if any, at its next regularly scheduled meeting and will approve or disapprove of the recommendation.
- The hearing officer will make factual findings of the allegations of misconduct against the student. If the findings are substantiated, the hearing officer may recommend an additional year of expulsion. A hearing officer does not decide whether a student is entitled to attend an alternative school.
- The district must offer educational services to ESE students during the period of expulsion. Expulsion of students with disabilities is defined as removal from one program to another, not exclusion from public education. Services may not be provided through a regular school assignment.

300.21 — **Disruptive Students** – Staff Intervention

The use of reasonable physical force must be consistent with federal, state and local laws, school district rules and school board policy. A staff member shall have the authority, while on duty, to come into physical contact with a student or students to the degree necessary for the purpose of establishing or maintaining control of students, including to reasonably protect himself/herself, other people or property. Such physical contact shall not be construed to be corporal punishment. At all times by School Board personnel, any force used must be reasonable, no more than necessary, and proportionate to the threat posed. Such force shall last no longer than reasonably necessary.

300.22 — **Reporting of Crimes and/or Disruptive Behavior**

It is important that all students and parents/guardians understand that certain criminal and/or disruptive behavior must, by school board policy, be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities. The following types of incidents will be reported: alcohol use, arson, battery, bullying, breaking/entering, drugs, kidnapping, larceny/theft, possession or use of weapons or explosive devices, property damage, vandalism, robbery, sex offenses, sexual battery, sexual harassment or any other serious incident or disruption of school operation. Any student formally charged with a felony by the proper prosecuting authority shall be subjected to suspension in accordance with Florida Statutes for a period that may exceed 10 (ten) days, as determined by the superintendent. If the student is adjudicated delinquent or guilty of a felony, the school board has the authority to expel the student.

300.23 — **Procedures for Off-Campus Felony Cases**

Florida Statutes Florida Statute 1006.09 (2) allows the superintendent to suspend a student from school for a period longer than 10 (ten) days when a student has been formally charged with a felony committed on property other than public school property. In order for districts to utilize this section of the statutes, a student must have been formally charged, and in an administrative hearing, the school/district must show that the incident will have an adverse effect on the educational program, discipline or welfare of the school in which the student is enrolled. If the student is adjudicated guilty or delinquent, the school board may expel the student.



Search Policy

School personnel may search students reasonably suspected of being in possession of contraband or other prohibited items while on school district property or wherever students are under the official supervision of district employees, such as on field trips, at extracurricular activities, or while being transported to and from such places either by school bus, by approved drivers, or by other means of conveyance.

- School personnel may conduct a search of a student, a student's possessions, a student's locker, or any other storage area on school property without a warrant when school personnel have reasonable suspicion that illegal, prohibited or harmful items or substances, or stolen property, maybe concealed on a student's person or in a storage area.
- School personnel are encouraged to attempt to obtain consent from a student to search for illegal, prohibited, harmful items or substances, or stolen property, but may proceed with a search without a student's consent, upon reasonable suspicion of a prohibited or illegally possessed substance or object.
- School personnel has the authority to search a student's backpack, purse, or wallet, upon reasonable suspicion, if the student refuses to reveal the contents inside.
- School lockers are the property of the district and are subject to periodic searches without prior notice and without reasonable suspicion of a violation of the law.
- Parking a vehicle on school district property is a privilege that may be extended to students. All students desiring to park a vehicle on school district property shall be required to sign a consent form allowing the vehicle, upon reasonable suspicion, to be searched by the principal or his or her designee. Refusal of a student to cooperate in the request to search his or her vehicle shall result in the revocation of the student's parking permit for two (2) years from the date of refusal.



Dress Code

The Sarasota County School District has established procedural guidelines for student dress, in accordance with School Board Policy 5.37. Refusal to comply with the school's dress code policy is an infraction under this code.

Individual schools are expected to use the District dress code guidelines as minimum standards and are encouraged to extend their own standards to meet the uniqueness of their school community. Minimum standard of dress code is expected. The principal's decision or principal designees on the appropriateness of dress will be final. Please check with your school for all additional dress code guidelines. **Principal or principal designee decisions are final.**

SKIRTS, DRESSES & SHORTS



Must be worn above the hips

Rips are allowed below mid-thigh

No excessively short skirts, shorts, or dresses that at any time expose underwear or body parts in an indecent or vulgar manner



SHIRTS & TOPS



Straps must be minimum of 1 inch

No low-cut tops

No see-through clothing

Gap below armpit must not be larger than 3 inches

Clothing must cover the mid-riff when standing naturally



JEANS, PANTS, LEGGINGS & EXPOSED UNDERGARMENTS



No exposed undergarments

No pajamas or slippers

Rips are allowed below mid-thigh





Students have a RIGHT to:

- Wear appropriate clothes or the school uniform, as long as those clothes or the way the clothes are worn are appropriate for the school setting, adhere to the school dress code, are not dangerous to health or safety, and do not disrupt the learning environment.
- Learn without being offended or disrupted by the way other students are dressed.

Students have a RESPONSIBILITY to:

- Comply with the school dress code.
- Be respectful of their peers at all times regardless of what they are wearing.
- Come to school fully clothed and wear clothes which are not dangerous to health or safety, do not disrupt the learning process, and stay within the school dress code.
- Dress in a way not offensive to others at school or at school-sponsored events, including, but not limited to:
- **No:**
 - exposed undergarments
 - jeans, shorts, skirts, dresses or pants worn below the hips
 - jeans, shorts, skirts, dresses or pants with rips above the mid-thigh
 - excessively short skirts, shorts, or dresses that at any time expose underwear or body parts in an indecent or vulgar manner
 - pajamas or slippers
 - excessively low-cut tops
 - see-through clothing (includes mesh material mid-thigh and above)
 - clothing of an ethnic or racially offensive nature
- Clothing must cover the mid-riff when standing naturally
- Sleeveless shirts must have straps with a minimum width of one inch (about two fingers) and the gap below the armpit cannot be excessive of three inches (about four fingers)
- Not wear items or markings which are offensive, suggestive, indecent, or associated with gangs; as identified by the Florida Gang Intent Act of 1990.
- Not wear items which encourage the use of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, violence, weapons, or support discrimination on account of race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, age, disability, veteran or military status, marital status, pregnancy, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by federal or state law or School Board policy.



When a student's compliance with the Venice High Dress Code is in question, they will be sent to the clinic. Consequences for violations may include, but are not limited to the following:

- **1st Offense:** Change into appropriate clothing and call home
- **2nd Offense:** Change into appropriate clothing and call home
- **3rd Offense:** Administrative referral with consequences, change into appropriate clothing and call home

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Students may possess an electronic device at schools. Tablets, smartphones, smart devices, laptops or other devices or technology that receive, send or store digital data are acceptable, provided that the students are using the devices for educational purposes, in conformance with School Board policies and procedures, and have permission from a staff member at the school. The School Board is not responsible for preventing theft, loss, damage, or vandalism to electronic devices or technology brought onto its property or vehicles or used during or for a school-related purpose. Refer to Sarasota County [School Board Policy 5.38](#) for full district policy regarding student use of electronic devices.

By default, electronic devices (including earbuds) **MUST** be silenced and kept away when entering a class or office. Students are permitted to use their cell phone/electronic devices **ONLY** under teacher direction for instructional purposes, which will be indicated by a green “**Electronic Devices Permitted**” sign. If the sign indicates “**Electronic Devices Must Be Silenced and Put Away**,” then all personal electronic devices should be kept silenced and put away in the student's bag or teacher's designated cell phone caddy.



All electronic devices (including earbuds) must be left in class when using the restroom or when in the hallways during class time. Any student found with a cell phone in the hallway will be sent back to class.

Failure to adhere to electronic device expectations may include but are not limited to the following:

- **1st Offense:** Warning and Parent Contact



- **2nd Offense:** Lunch Detention and Parent Contact
- **3rd Offense:** Administrative Referral and Confiscate Devices Until End of Day



SARASOTA COUNTY SCHOOLS

2023-2024 DISTRICT ACADEMIC CALENDAR

1960 Landings Blvd. Sarasota, FL 34231 Phone (941) 927-9000

JULY 2023				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

3rd - 7th - 240 Staff Non-Work Days
18th - 220 Staff Return

AUGUST 2023				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

3rd - 196 Staff Return
10th - First Day for Students, 186 Staff

SEPTEMBER 2023				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
				1
	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

4th - Labor Day - Students, All Staff

OCTOBER 2023				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

12th - End of 1st Grading Period
16th - Professional Day - Students, 186 Staff

NOVEMBER 2023				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22		
27	28	29	30	

20th - 24th - Thanksgiving Break - Students, 186, 196, 220 Staff
23rd - 24th - Thanksgiving Break - 240 Staff

DECEMBER 2023				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

21st - End of 2nd Grading Period
22nd - Professional Day - Students, 186 Staff
25th - 29th - Winter Break - Students, All Staff

JANUARY 2024				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

1st - 5th - Winter Break - Students, All Staff
15th - Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Students, All Staff

FEBRUARY 2024				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	

19th - Presidents Day - Students, All Staff

MARCH 2024				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

7th - End of 3rd Grading Period
8th - Professional Day - Students, 186 Staff
11th - 15th - Spring Break - Students, All Staff
29th - Mini Break - Students, 186, 196, 220 Staff

APRIL 2024				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

MAY 2024				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
	28	29	30	31

24th - Last Day for Students, 186 Staff
27th - Memorial Day - All Staff
29th - Last Day for 196 Staff

JUNE 2024				
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

14th - Last Day for 220 Staff

*Orange highlighted days will be used as inclement weather makeup days if needed